

**100**  
PAGES!

# STAR WARS

**EPISODE I THE PHANTOM MENACE**

## EXCLUSIVE

Jar Jar Binks:  
The Real Story!

## FLIGHT CLUB!

Actor Ralph Brown  
Takes the Controls

## PHANTOM FACTS!

Discover the Secrets of  
*The Phantom Menace*

## SITH VERSUS SEPARATIST

Maul Takes on Dooku

# THE SAGA BEGINS

CELEBRATE 10 YEARS OF STAR WARS:  
EPISODE I THE PHANTOM MENACE

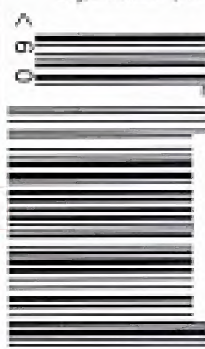
## MORE MAUL!

The Expanded  
Universe of Episode I

## BLASTER!

Books, Collecting, Toys,  
Classic Scene, Ask Lobot,  
Comics, Bounty Hunters,  
Bantha Tracks and More!

ISSUE #109  
May/June 2009 \$7.99





DOCKING BAY

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"WE'LL HANDLE THIS."—QUI-GON JINN

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# THE SPECIAL EDITION!

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## Cinemaquettes: Making the Movies Real

In the crowded category of movie memorabilia, one name has in recent years taken collectors by storm: Cinemaquette. A boutique division of the popular collectible manufacturer Toynami, the artists and designers at Cinemaquette have spent the last five years creating incredibly realistic 1:3 scale statues of the most unforgettable characters from film history, with the assistance of some of the most famous names from behind the Hollywood cameras. From costumes to weaponry to their unbelievable facial features, Cinemaquettes of characters like the Alien, the Predator, Aragorn and Captain Jack Sparrow have stunned and delighted movie fans around the world. We spoke to Cinemaquette CEO and lead designer George Sohn about what goes into these amazing pieces of art.

### So how did Cinemaquettes come about?

**GEORGE SOHN:** Actually, I am a longtime collector of the super hero and sci-fi genre, which includes everything from comic books, action figures, statues and even movie props. After collecting for nearly 20 years, I grew bored with the products that were out on the market and was at the same time always fascinated with the type of quality that could be accomplished by some of my friends in the movie industry. I was always amazed at the level of detail and materials they would use to make the creatures and props for films. Then one day in 2002, it occurred to me that I could apply these techniques to creating actual consumer products that could be shared with other collectors like myself. Thus I created Cinemaquette.

### What goes into deciding who makes the cut as a Cinemaquette?

**GS:** Well, I have been asked this same question many times. Cinemaquette was really created as a hobby of mine. When I sit in my office and look at my collection, I think about all of the collectibles that I own and what properties and characters I remember most. I think of the movies that were most memorable, which ones scared me the most, or the ones that affected me emotionally. I think about the talents and actors that were involved in each film and wonder how they would look in my Cinemaquette treatment. A lot of factors are considered before we actually move forward with a property, but I think what it really boils down to is what characters will leave the most memorable impression when you look at it. Take for example, the Terminator Endoskeleton or Indiana Jones. Both characters are clearly identifiable and will instantly pull your thoughts back to the scene of the actual film. These are the types of movies that we consider and the characters that we hope to immortalize in our collection.

### What kind of challenges are involved in making such detailed collectibles?

**GS:** Believe me, the idea was easier than the execution. Seeing my friends in the movie industry do this for years was a lot easier than trying to set up a factory and training the worker to do the same. Getting the materials to China where the Cinemaquettes are made was not easy. We had to source materials that were never used in the collectible business before. Even after finding all of the materials, it took me nearly one year to set the factory up so that they had the skills to

actually produce the goods at a level that I felt was acceptable. I must say that I am very proud of our facility and their ability to learn such a difficult skill so quickly. We do use the talents of some of Hollywood's best effects artists to help us with the development. Many of them were the production talent from the actual movie, the designers and artists that worked on the film. These sort of talents really make up what Cinemaquette is really about: providing the most authentic and original artwork that you will ever find in any movie collectible.

### How has the reaction been from the actors and special effects professionals who get involved?

**GS:** All of the talent and special effects professionals were more than thrilled to assist us. They actually wanted to see product on the market that was authentic and true to the movie, with the knowledge that the same people who worked on the film were working on our pieces. The actors were also very kind to endorse and sign the certificates that come with every Cinemaquette.

### Let's talk specifically about the Indiana Jones Cinemaquette. What makes it stand out from all other Indy products on the market?

**GS:** Let's just say that you will never find another product on the market that looks like our Indiana Jones Cinemaquette. The heads of our maquettes are made out of silicon and punched with real human hair. Indy has over 1,000 hair punches in each head, which were painstakingly punched one at a time. If you touch the face, you would think that the skin was real. You can pinch it and squeeze it like you could a real human face. Just think of it as a real human, but only 1/3 of the size.

### What else have you got in store for the future?

**GS:** The year 2009 may be one of our best years yet. I can't tell you the actual characters, but let's just say that one is a Hero and one is a Villain, and that's "hero" and "villain" with a capital "H" and "V". They are from different properties, but each is one of the most iconic in the world. You will just have to wait and see.







## EDITOR'S WELCOME

**"I've gotten much better performances out of my aliens this time!"**

—George Lucas. *Vanity Fair* Interview. 1999

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**A** high speed—and high stakes—race across the surface of an arid planet; benevolent Jedi warriors keeping the peace on thousands of worlds, while a glamorous young Queen addresses a sprawling Galactic Senate; democracy spiralling out of control as a seemingly mild-mannered Senator makes plans to bring it all down; heroic astromech droids fighting to save a stricken spaceship as they are systematically blasted into pieces; a climactic lightsaber battle, with four blades ignited in fierce combat—two from the same hilt!

These aren't just the best moments and ideas in *The Phantom Menace*, these are some of the best moments and ideas in *Star Wars*—period! It's incredible to think that it's a decade since Episode I was released, starting the prequel trilogy in fine style. May 22, 1999 also marked the point where "modern" *Star Wars* was born, leading to *The Clone Wars*, *The Force Unleashed* and myriad other Expanded Universe continuations of the saga. It's very hard to imagine a time when none of this existed outside George Lucas' fertile imagination.

I absolutely love *The Phantom Menace*. It's a rich adventure in the finest *Star Wars* tradition: action-packed, thought-provoking, and filled with wonderful moments that could only happen in this saga. It's surprisingly dark and political in places, and far subtler than some of its harsher critics would give it credit for. The characters are strong, vibrant

and totally unforgettable. From the charismatic, forward thinking, Qui-Gon Jinn to the devious gambler, Watto, they all fit perfectly into the established universe. So much so, in fact, that you'd swear that some of the characters making their debuts here appeared in the original trilogy!

There are plenty of surprises that changed



### MICRO MENACE!

Think you know all there is to know about Episode I? Think again as we present our guide to the secrets of *The Phantom Menace* on page 28!

our perceptions of the saga: Who knew that Anakin Skywalker built C-3PO? Did anyone expect to see Obi-Wan Kenobi's master in action? And was anybody else shocked to see that a Sith's lightsaber could do *that*?

Your aliens might have given better performances this time George, but the movie is every bit the *Star Wars* that we know and love.

May the Force be with you all!

*Jonathan Wilkins*

Jonathan Wilkins, Editor





# LAUNCH

ALL THE LATEST NEWS, FUN, GAMES AND GOSSIP FROM THE STAR WARS UNIVERSE

## LIVE ACTION ON TARGET.... BUT STILL FAR, FAR AWAY!

**D**espite rumors to the contrary, casting of the eagerly anticipated *Star Wars* live action TV show is still at the earliest possible stages, with casting beginning in earnest once scripts have been written.

*Entertainment Weekly* confirmed with a Lucasfilm representative that a casting agent in Australia is "doing some preliminary ground work, but official casting will not start until the scripts are complete," adding that the TV series would not go into production until 2010 at the earliest. 🍌

## THE GIFT OF (A NEW) HOPE

**P**resident Obama presented British Prime Minister Gordon Brown with a set of DVDs, including *Star Wars: Episode IV A New Hope*, during his recent visit to the U.S.A. It's a generous gift and we are sure the PM was pleased, but surely the Commander-in-Chief could have splashed out on the entire saga in the name of diplomatic relations? 🍌



## MUSICAL JOURNEY PLANS WORLD TOUR



**A**fter a spectacular launch at London's O2 arena, *Star Wars: A Musical Journey*, will go on hiatus before starting its worldwide tour, probably later this year.

The tour, which features John Williams' much loved compositions performed live by an 86-piece orchestra and choir, features a 100-foot screen displaying edited scenes from all six movies cued to the music, along with an amazing pre-show with archival objects and video. The idea came during the scoring phase of post-production on *Revenge of the Sith* according to Howard Roffman, president of Lucas Licensing. He said, "We were really looking for something that would be spectacular and reach as many people as possible." 🍌

EXPANDED UNIVERSE >>>

For the latest on the tour, check out [www.starwars.com](http://www.starwars.com)



# PAD



**PAGE 26**

Discover the secrets of *The Phantom Menace* in our **EPISODE I VISUAL GUIDE!**

**PAGE 39**

Meet the man behind the CGI as we learn to love Jar Jar Binks! **AHMED BEST INTERVIEW**



**PLUS:** 14.INTERROGATION DROID// 47.RALPH BROWN  
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## WRITERS HONORED!



**T**he Writers Guild of America recently announced LucasArts' *Star Wars: The Force Unleashed* as the winner of its 2009

Videogame Writing Award. Written by Haden Blackman, Shawn Pitman, John Stafford, and Cameron Suey, the game beat out nominees *Command & Conquer: Red Alert 3*, *Dangerous High School Girls in Trouble!*, *Fallout 3* and *Tomb Raider: Underworld* to win the coveted prize. Congratulations guys! 🎉

### STAR WARS TIME FRAME



**Top:** Even Sith Lords can get sunburn. Ray Park takes some time out between backflips!

**Middle:** Ahmed Best and Jake Lloyd compare hairstyles! Ahmed wins.

**Bottom:** Preparing for a shock! Ahmed Best gets a little too close to those pesky energy binders.

**INSIDER  
ONLINE!**



**Facebook:**

Join the *Insider* fan group on Facebook! Simply search for "*Star Wars Insider*"



# STAR WARS

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# COMLINK

YOUR STAR WARS VIEWS



STAR WARS INSIDER'S COM-CHANNELS ARE OPEN  
AND WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! ARE YOU  
CRAZY ABOUT *STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS*?  
MAYBE YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT YOUR LOVE  
OF THE *HOLIDAY SPECIAL*? WE HAVE PRIZES  
FROM GENTLE GIANT FOR EVERY MESSAGE WE  
PRINT, SO WRITE IN [DETAILS BELOW] AND TELL  
US WHAT YOU LOVE ABOUT THE *STAR WARS* SAGA!

## DROID DANGLING BY A THREAD!

I have an idea for an article for *Star Wars Insider* called "How Stealthy is your Artoo unit?" I wondered what a commando astromech droid would do on a mission. I also wanted to show how cool Hasbro's new *Clone Wars* action figures are!

Nathan Corbyn, by email



We love the idea of brave astromech droids on a mission, Nathan! What do other readers think? Send in your photos of R2 units in action! A prize for the quirkiest mission!

## FANS USE THE FORCE?

I am a huge *Star Wars* fan from Australia and I would like to add my thoughts on a collective name for us fans. How about Force Users?

I am really enjoying *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* so far. Please George, don't stop at 100 episodes, keep it running forever!

Adam Clark, Melbourne, Australia

Force Users huh? What do you guys think? Send in your suggestions for a collective term for *Star Wars* fans to the usual address.

## GAME ON!

I wanted to share my thoughts on *Star Wars: The Force Unleashed*. I got it for my Playstation 3 at Christmas and have played it solidly ever since. I love the

story—it really feels as epic and exciting as an actual *Star Wars* movie.

The acting is absolutely fantastic—not always the case in a videogame—and the controls are responsive and easy to use. I felt like a Jedi the minute I picked up my controller! My thanks goes to all at LucasArts and the talented cast who have made the game a joy to play!

Any chance of a sequel?

Rachael Ferris, by email

## A DROID IS FOR LIFE!

After reading *Star Wars Insider* 107, I was reflecting on how C-3PO has stood the test of time in the movies and as my favorite character. After seeing the original movie in 1977 at the age of 12, my childhood friend and I each bought a model of one of the droids as a testament of their friendship. It was one of the first pieces in my collection.

Sadly, my friend and I drifted apart and I don't know what happened to his R2-D2, but after 30 years and several moves, I still have my C-3PO model. He's weathered as much as the real deal, but he still looks good after all these years! I have the model on display on my shelf, and still have the original box and instructions in a closet.

I wanted to share with you the pictures of then and now. Thanks for keeping up the *Star Wars* tradition and keeping the memories alive!

J. Baumann, Kentucky, U.S.A.



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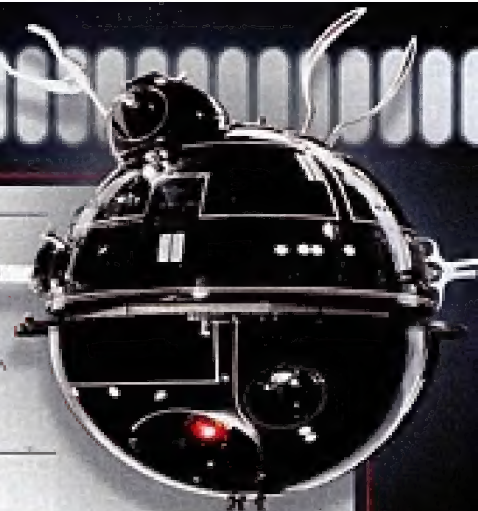
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# INTERROGATION DROID!

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STAR WARS INSIDER SPARS WITH DARTH MAUL HIMSELF. ACTOR RAY PARK! WORDS: CHRIS SPITALE



If Darth Maul and Snake Eyes from *G.I. Joe* faced off in the ultimate duel, who would win?

Of the characters that I have portrayed, Snake Eyes and Darth Maul are my favorites. That's a tough question! Ray Park would win!

If Darth Maul had lived to wreak havoc in Episodes II or III, what do you think his role would have been? I would have loved for him to come back in Episode III to fight Anakin and, in turn, Darth Vader.

In the Expanded Universe, Maul's upper body is rescued and given cybernetic legs. If they were to retrieve his lower body, what do you think they'd surgically add?

A lampshade.

If Maul had his own Sith apprentice, do you think he'd rather mentor an Ewok, a Gungan, or a Huttlet? None of them! He's a solo guy.

If Maul could duel anyone in the *Star Wars* universe, what ultimate battle would you like to see? General Grievous or Darth Vader.

Would Maul be more tempted to abandon the Sith Order to run away with Padmé Amidala or Princess Leia?

He would never run away with either of them, but he would make them both his slaves!

**NAME:** RAY PARK  
**ALIAS:** DARTH MAUL

**FIRST APPEARANCE:**  
**EPISODE I THE PHANTOM MENACE**

Darth Maul is the only character in the *Star Wars* movie saga to have a double-bladed lightsaber. If you could double up on anything, what would it be? I wish I had four arms sometimes to handle my kids!



Darth Vader's got that heavy breathing, and Grievous has that wheezing cough—what ailment was Maul hiding? Bad gas.

If Maul lost his saber in the midst of battle, do you think he would just ram his enemies with his horned head? He'd do butterfly twisting head butts. And he's good at hand-to-hand combat, but we never got to expand on that.

In the Expanded Universe, Maul has been depicted as having tattoos covering his entire body. If George Lucas decided to add new scenes to *The Phantom Menace*, would you be up for having your entire body inked?

Yes! In a heartbeat. I'm hoping he will—please, George? 🙏









1999-2009

SALUTING  
10 YEARS OF

**STAR WARS**

# EPISODE I

THE PHANTOM MENACE.

**R**leased with unprecedented media interest, it was impossible to avoid *The Phantom Menace* during the summer of 1999. The movie set the standard for hype, but it was not generated by 20th Century Fox or Lucasfilm, but rather by audiences' sheer desire to see the new *Star Wars* movie. Add to that the emergence of the Internet as a not-always-reliable source of information—Charlton Heston being cast as Yoda and Macaulay Culkin playing the non-existent role of the young Luke Skywalker were two of the crazier suggestions—and you had not just a movie, but a global event that everybody was talking about.

The most eagerly awaited movie of all time, *Star Wars: Episode I The Phantom Menace* is also one of the most influential. Popularizing the idea of the prequel in modern cinema, a variety of franchises have now gone back to their beginnings, with the James Bond and Batman series of movies both enjoying the prequel treatment to much acclaim, and the crew of the *U.S.S. Enterprise* boldly going back to the beginning in J.J. Abrams' 2009 take on *Star Trek*.

The first computer generated character in a main role, Jar Jar Binks, appeared in *The Phantom Menace*, paving the way for *The Lord of the Rings*'s Gollum, King Kong, and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*'s Aslan to appear as photo realistic characters.

*The Phantom Menace* also marked the debut of the new Dolby Digital Surround EX format, offering stunning 6.1 sound that became an industry standard.

A smash hit, it went on to become the highest grossing movie of the year and earned its place in the top 10 of the highest grossing films of all time.



# BACK TO THE BEGINNING....

**WHAT DID THE *STAR WARS* CAST  
THINK ABOUT THEIR ROLES IN EPISODE I?  
*INSIDER* TURNS BACK THE CLOCK!**

CREDITS: Scott Chernoff, Lynne Hale,  
Jason Fry, Chris Spitalo

"It's the wonder in the children's eyes when they come up to you and ask what it was like to cut Darth Maul in half or turn your lightsaber on. It reminds me of how I felt when I was six years old."

Ewan McGregor, Obi-Wan Kenobi

"It's a simple story, yet with all the complexities of myth. The technology is so understated. I thought [George Lucas] was an amazing director who created this totally believable world."

Liam Neeson, Qui-Gon Jinn

"I can't wait until they have girl lightsaber fights. That would be awesome!"

Natalie Portman,  
Queen Amidala

**"Everybody was so down to earth, it was unbelievable. It was a big slice of heaven and a side order of fries!"**

Jake Lloyd, Anakin Skywalker

"I didn't realize at the time how big the character would be. I was just grateful to get a part in a movie where I could show my martial arts and acting skills and have fun. I get a lot of recognition for Maul. Meeting the fans and attending a lot of conventions has kept me enthusiastic and wanting to continue in acting."

Ray Park, Darth Maul

**"I'm terrifically pleased to be in *Star Wars*! I couldn't wait to say 'May the Force be with you!'"**

Samuel L. Jackson, Mace Windu





**"I think it's important to show our children this battle between good and evil, where good triumphs. Besides, the humor attracts me."**

Pernilla August, Shmi Skywalker

**"I literally had no idea what it was going to be like. It was really amazing. You see yourself in a place you've never been before. I mean, we literally shot things in a parking lot with a blue sheet behind us and all of a sudden—in the finished film—it's this magnificent castle with trees. It's bizarre, because I know I've never been there!"**

Natalie Portman,  
Queen Amidala

**"I always wanted to be a cowboy, and Jedi Knights are basically cowboys in space, right?"**

Liam Neeson, Qui-Gon Jinn

**"To start life as a character of 120 years when you are in your late 30s and go back in time 20 years later to play the same character, who is your own age, is very complicated, but very interesting!"**

Ian McDiarmid, Palpatine/Darth Sidious

**"The first time Ewan and I had to do any lightsaber work, we started making the lightsaber noises and soon felt a bit silly."**

Liam Neeson, Qui-Gon Jinn

**"The Queen was based on Lauren Bacall, Katharine Hepburn and Audrey Hepburn—the way they were, the way they carried themselves and the way they talked."**

Natalie Portman,  
Queen Amidala







**"It seemed so extraordinary to get up every morning and go to the Galactic Empire down the road!"**

Ian McDiarmid, Palpatine/Darth Sidious

**"Yoda is very hard work. It's really five days of rehearsal for two days of shooting, because every single move and every blink has to be worked out. On the other hand, it's nice to see an old friend like Yoda and to dig a little deeper into the character because it's more about acting than performing."**

Frank Oz, Yoda

**"To be a part of a legend, to be part of a modern myth, and to play the young Alec Guinness is an incredible honor."**

Ewan McGregor, Obi-Wan Kenobi

**"I remember hearing that the story was going to revolve around two Jedi: an older Jedi and a younger Jedi. I met George [Lucas] in London, we had lunch and we talked about rearing kids, and he suggested books I should read on disciplining them. We never talked about *Star Wars*. At the end of it, I said, 'For what it's worth, I'd really like to do your film.'"**

Liam Neeson, Qui-Gon Jinn

**"[When I met George Lucas] I was trying to exude this coolness, but I keep tripping over things—inside I was nearly having a heart attack."**

Peter Serafinowicz,  
voice of Darth Maul


**"All of the stuff I did was bluescreen, which was kind of nice because we, George Lucas' artists, were all he had to focus on. He had no worries about the set or the lighting. It was just us, and we had his whole attention."**

Terence Stamp, Chancellor Valorum

**"Nobody frowns better than me and Liam in this movie, because we have the Jedi frown. We're just kind of cool geezers!"**

Ewan McGregor, Obi-Wan Kenobi





**"George Lucas was very easy to work with. He's so hands-on with everything. It's an amazing responsibility to shoulder and he does it with such unbelievable ease—and with a few laughs."**

Lewis MacLeod, Sebulba

**"I've never done anything like fantasy or science fiction, where they actually would put a 14-year-old girl in charge. In real life they won't put girls in power, usually!"**

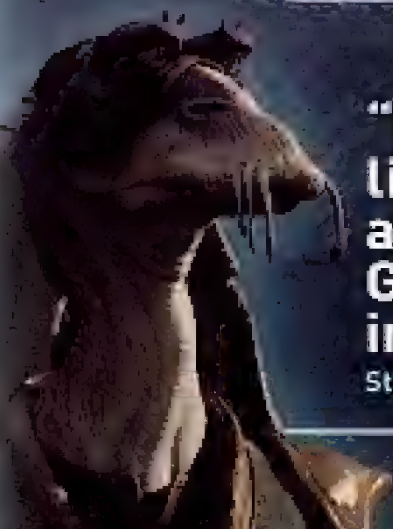
Natalie Portman,  
Queen Amidala

**"We have a couple of scenes where some creatures fly in my face and I wanted to be able to focus on where they are supposed to be. If I hadn't, I think the audience would subconsciously recognize that. So, we used lots of tricks like little painted ping pong balls. Very technical!"**

Liam Neeson, Qui-Gon Jinn

**"It's pointless being nervous. I just let go and tried to enjoy the whole thing. It was lovely working with such good and experienced people—it makes things so much easier."**

Andy Secombe, Watto



**"It was a bit like driving around in George Lucas' imagination."**

Steven Spiers, Tarpals

**"I found out the voice doesn't age very much. So I used an old man's voice as a young man."**

Ewan McGregor, Obi-Wan Kenobi



"I met R2-D2 for the first time, which was quite a moment. It was like meeting the Queen—it was a very honored moment! He was just wheeled onto the set casually and I swear all of the actors were standing around him in a circle saying 'Hello Artoo!'"

Ewan McGregor, Obi-Wan Kenobi

"I just act like myself. He's a lot like me. I love doing mechanics. Anakin is one mechanical kid!"

Jake Lloyd, Anakin Skywalker

"We had two and a half hours of hair and makeup every day. It was really bizarre because the costumes they made were really easy to get in and out of, but the hair was woven into my hair so I couldn't take it off."

Natalie Portman, Queen Amidala

"In the United States I was on Kentucky Fried Chicken boxes and I'm a vegetarian. I thought, 'I can't believe this!'"

Natalie Portman, Queen Amidala

"I figured the tougher I was, the tougher it would make the Jedi seem to be. Obviously nobody out-toughed the Jedi, but Captain Panaka was going to give them a run for their money!"

Hugh Quarshie, Captain Panaka





## DATABANK

Count Dooku was born into wealth and nobility. Displaying Force abilities at an early age, his parents were proud to see him taken into the Jedi Order.

Yoda took a keen interest in the young Dooku. He assisted in Dooku's combat training and as a result, the Padawan became especially proficient with a lightsaber. Only

Masters Yoda and Mace Windu were considered to be on equal terms with him. After discovering that Senator Palpatine was a Sith Lord, Dooku turned to the dark side and became a Dark Lord of the Sith himself. As Darth Sidious' new apprentice, he was given the Sith name Darth Tyrannus.

## PROFILE

HOMEWORLD: SERENNO

SPECIES: HUMAN

GENDER: MALE

HEIGHT: 1.93 METERS

WEAPONS: LIGHTSABER

VEHICLE: SOLAR SAILER

AFFILIATION: SITH, C.I.S.

## SKILLS

With a near unrivalled knowledge of the Force combined with formidable skill with a lightsaber, Dooku was virtually indomitable. A natural leader, able to rally others to a cause that wasn't necessarily just, the charismatic former Jedi was also an able teacher who passed on his skills to Asajj Ventress and also coached the droid leader, General Grievous, in the Jedi arts.

He was able to use the dark side of the Force to channel deadly lightning bolts and was skilled in the Sith art of Dun Möch, or disrupting an opponent's concentration by the use of taunts.

STRENGTH	80
SPEED	80
POWER	90
LEADERSHIP	100
MOBILITY	80
LOYALTY	100
SPECIAL ABILITY	95
BONUS SKILL	95

# COUNT DOOKU

**T**he Sith: enemies of the Jedi who were thought to be extinct until their order returned to galactic prominence when the evil Darth Sidious brought down the Republic and instigated the Jedi purge.

Darth Maul—Sidious' first apprentice—challenged the Jedi during the Trade Federation's attack on Naboo. He was

dispatched on countless missions, murdering various prominent figures across the galaxy. Maul's tattooed visage struck fear into the hearts of his foes, but his ultimate desire was to destroy the Jedi.

Maul was dispatched to Tatooine to capture Queen Amidala. There he had a short, but intense duel with the Jedi.





# DARTH MAUL

Master Qui-Gon Jinn. Later, Maul was sent to Naboo, where he fought Jinn and his apprentice Obi-Wan Kenobi. Though he killed the Jedi Master he underestimated Kenobi's skill, and was slain by the Padawan. Sidious would quickly replace Maul with another apprentice, the former Jedi Master Count Dooku, who under the guise of his Sith title, Lord Tyrannus, was a vital pawn in

his master's plot to overthrow the Senate and wipe out the ancient Jedi Order.

Two Sith warriors, deadly and skilled in causing death and anarchy. But will the younger, more animalistic rage of Darth Maul triumph or does the measured evil of the Separatist leader mean that Dooku has the upper hand?

Turn to page 95 now to find out.

## DATABANK

A master of various disciplines, including Juyo, Jar'Kai, and Teräs Käsi, Darth Maul chose to use a red double-bladed lightsaber for combat. He rarely spoke, instead preferring to intimidate his foes with his terrifying visage and flamboyant fighting skills. Maul used martial arts and hand-to-hand combat skills—a powerful combination that was at odds with the more civilized skills of his Jedi foes.

Maul built his lightsaber himself, following ancient plans stored within a Sith holocron. His Master, Darth Sidious, gave Maul a powerful Sith infiltrator called Scimitar which contained a cloaking shield generator that allowed him to carry out his evil missions undetected.

## PROFILE

HOMEWORLD: IRIDONIA

SPECIES: ZABRAK

GENDER: MALE

HEIGHT: 1.75 METERS

WEAPON: LIGHTSABER

VEHICLE: SITH INFILTRATOR

AFFILIATION: SITH

## SKILLS

As well as boasting great strength, speed and almost animal-like levels of aggression, Darth Maul used aggressive force grip and Force choke abilities to kill his foes. Darth Maul was also skilled in combining his Force talents with mechanics. With Sidious providing the funds required and a secret facility on Coruscant where he could work undetected by the Jedi, Maul was able to construct his deadly arsenal including his signature speeder bike, *Bloodfin* and the Dark Eye seeker droids.

90	STRENGTH
95	SPEED
85	POWER
20	LEADERSHIP
100	MOBILITY
95	LOYALTY
80	SPECIAL ABILITY
90	BONUS SKILL





INSIDER VISUAL COMMENTARY

# MENACE REVISITED

BY DAN WALLACE

WHEN WATCHING THE STAR WARS MOVIES, IT PAYS TO TAKE NOTICE, AND THE PHANTOM MENACE IS NO EXCEPTION. DAN WALLACE PUTS EPISODE I UNDER THE MICROSCOPE AND FINDS MORE THAN JUST MIDI-CHLORIANS IN OUR EXCLUSIVE ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST CHAPTER IN THE STAR WARS SAGA!



According to designer Doug Chiang, the **droidkas** were inspired by African sculptures with short legs and long torsos. He said, "It's an interpretation that has never been seen before in a mechanical design."

The Republic cruiser is named *Radiant VII*, while the Trade Federation battleship is called the *Profiteer*, or *Saak'ak* in the Neimoidian tongue.

The Republic cruiser is based on an early Colin Cantwell design for the *Millennium Falcon*. Its red markings indicate its status as a diplomatic vessel.



Ewan McGregor is the nephew of Denis Lawson, who portrayed Rebel pilot **Wedge Antilles**. Coincidence or the Force?



TC-14 looks outwardly similar to the classic trilogy's C-3PO, but belongs to the specialty TC line. TC protocol droids are the first Cybot Galactica models to carry a TranLang III communications module (hence the TC) and can speak millions of languages.



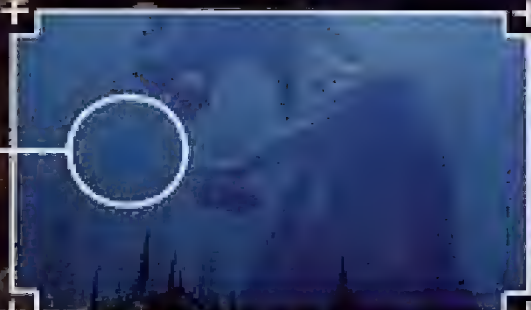
For the role of **Obi-Wan Kenobi**, casting director Robin Gurland and producer Rick McCallum posted photos of their top 50 candidates alongside a photo of Sir Alec Guinness.

After getting the part, Ewan McGregor studied Alec Guinness' mannerisms and underwent dialogue coaching to accurately replicate the late actor's performance.





Early designs for **Jar Jar Binks** depicted him with a greenish hue until research revealed that few aquatic creatures were green. The art department recast him with an orange tone instead.



The underwater bubble city of **Otoh Gunga** bears a heavy visual influence from the turn-of-the-century Art Nouveau movement. Said Chiang: "Art Nouveau has a very distinctive and organic look, and once I had that idea to lock onto, the city became much simpler to design."

The **sando aqua monster** is an astonishing 200 meters in length, nearly the size of a battleship. It was designed as an amalgam of an otter, a walrus, and a tiger, and its relatively small eyes help sell the illusion of titanic scale.

Queen Amidala's elaborate wardrobe and frequent costume changes allowed the art department to unleash its wildest designs. Artist Iain McCaig remarked, "The more outrageous it got, the better."

Natalie Portman said that she played Padmé using her own voice, and played **Queen Amidala** with an accent that was "kind of like the fake British accent people did back in the days of old-school Hollywood."





The Queen's starship does not have an official name. Its sleek design resembles that of the real-world Lockheed-Martin SR-71 Blackbird.

The ship's chromium finish indicates that its occupant is a Naboo monarch. Naboo's N-1 starfighters have chrome highlights because they are attached to the Royal House of Naboo.

The Queen's ship is technically known as a J-type 327 Nubian. The number "327" was also the number of the *Millennium Falcon's* Cloud City landing platform in *The Empire Strikes Back*.

George Lucas considered duality to be "one of the main themes" in the film, seen in Padmé's double role as Queen and handmaiden and Palpatine's duality. Other examples include the master/apprentice relationships between Qui-Gon and Obi-Wan, and between Darth Sidious and Darth Maul. There's also the symbiotic link between the Gungans and the Naboo.

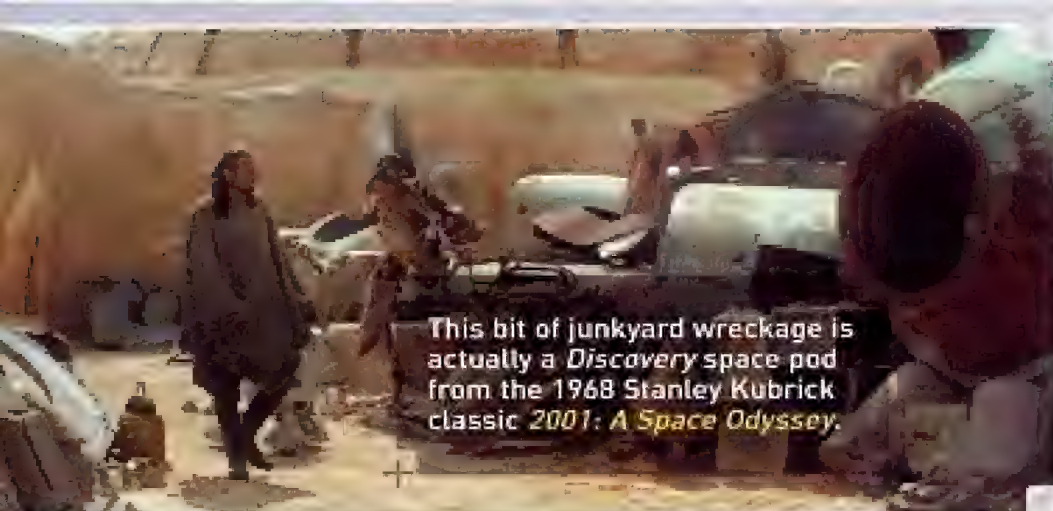
Animation director Rob Coleman was concerned that Watto's trunk would prevent convincing speech animation, but designer Doug Chiang didn't want to alter Watto's look. A compromise was reached by breaking one of Watto's tusks, allowing him to speak out of the side of his mouth.

Concept artist Terryl Whillatch said Watto began as an "ugly, cherub-type thing" on one of her sketches. "George saw it, suggested we give it duck feet, and Watto was born."



Visual effects supervisor John Knoll and his team had to write a computer program with the sole purpose of governing the movements of the little cord hanging from Watto's belt.





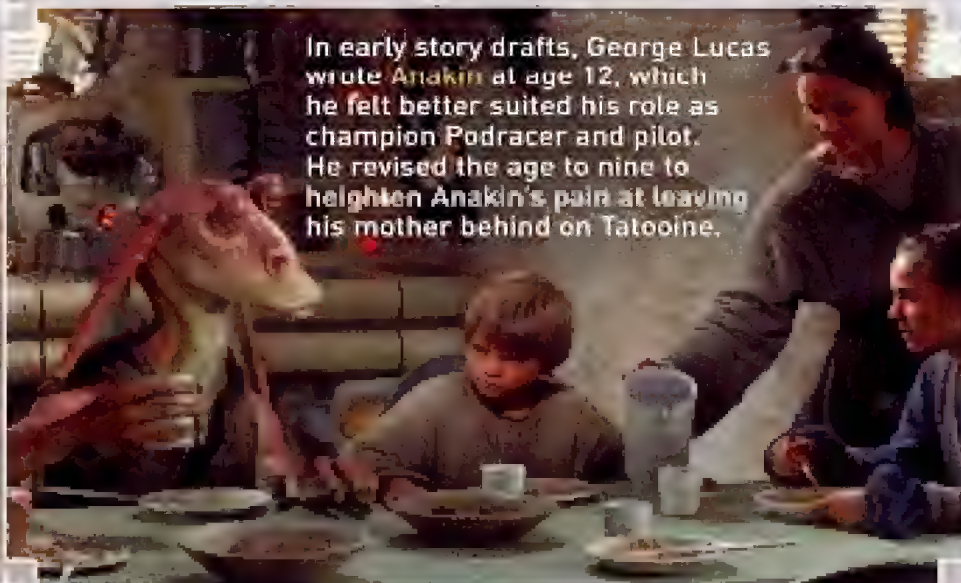
This bit of junkyard wreckage is actually a *Discovery* space pod from the 1968 Stanley Kubrick classic *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

An unprecedented sandstorm flattened the Tatooine sets in 1997. Rick McCallum called it "a hurricane and tornado combined," and 1,400 costumes needed to be dug out of the desert sands. George Lucas considered the disaster to be fate, since a similar storm had hit his Tunisia crew during the filming of the original *Star Wars*.



**Gragra** is a gorgmonger, or a street vendor who sells gorgs. These are small, dried amphibians that resemble frogs and get greedy Gungans into trouble!

**Gragra** is a member of the Swokes Swokes species from Makem Te. The label "Swokes Swokes" is derived from Sue Oaks, creature effects supervisor Nick Dudman's wife.



In early story drafts, George Lucas wrote Anakin at age 12, which he felt better suited his role as champion Podracer and pilot. He revised the age to nine to heighten Anakin's pain at leaving his mother behind on Tatooine.



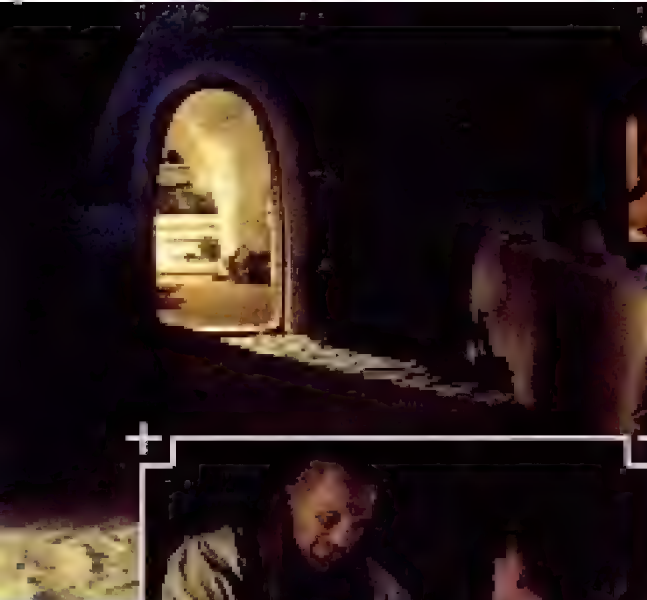
Before they belonged to **Watto**, **Anakin** and **Shmi** were the property of **Gardulla the Hutt**. Gardulla lost them in a bet when Anakin was three years old.

**Shmi** has long been a slave. At one point she was owned by a master named **Pi-Lippa** who taught her technology skills.

George Lucas frequently used "laser sword" in his early drafts of the screenplay in place of "lightsaber." Anakin's line in this scene is the only time the term has appeared in a *Star Wars* movie.

Liam Neeson fought to include overtones of a "subtle romance" between **Qui-Gon** and **Shmi** in the final film.



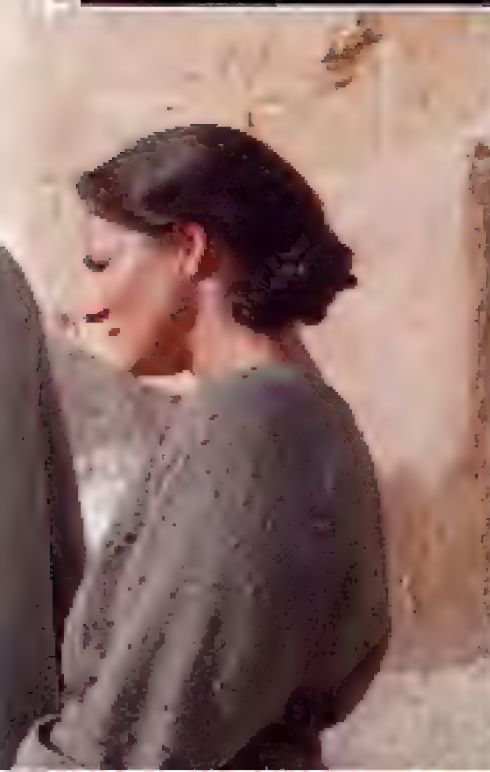


Anakin has a midi-chlorian count of over 20,000 according to Qui-Gon, ranking him even higher than Yoda. Expanded Universe sources have revealed that Force-sensitive beings might typically score in the 5,000 range.

The midi-chlorians are another example of the film's themes of symbiosis and duality.



This was the first scene shot for Episode I, going before the lens on June 26, 1997.



Although Ray Park played Darth Maul, the character's lines were dubbed by Peter Serafinowicz (*Shaun of the Dead*).





The arena stands are carved directly into the rock, a stylistic decision that made the venue look ancient. The arena also appears in the popular videogame *Episode I Racer*.

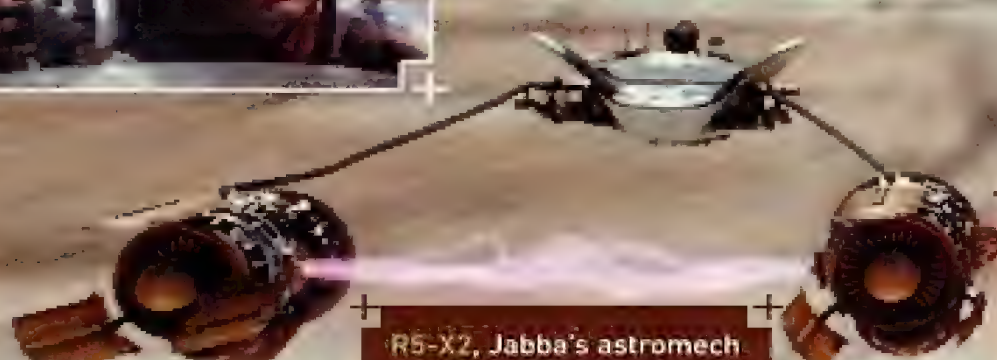
A model of the Podrace arena was constructed for certain shots. To simulate crowds of spectators, the model builders used colored cotton buds, indistinguishable from real people at a distance.



For the Podrace spectators, sound designer Ben Burtt recorded the crowd at a San Francisco 49ers football game.



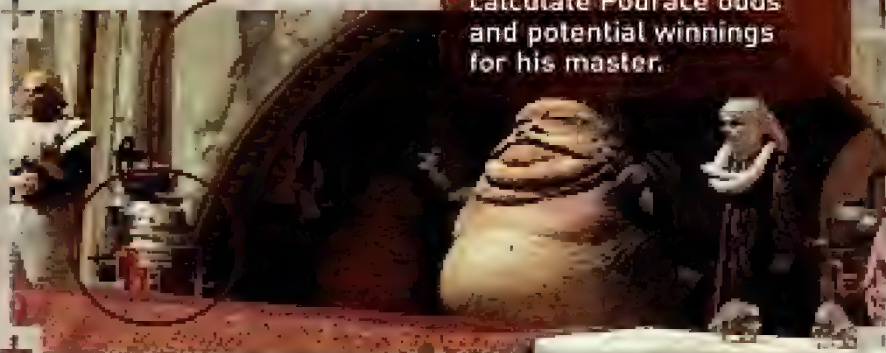
Anakin's unique helmet was designed for his small head by a Mos Espa craftsman named Taleb.



R5-X2, Jabba's astromech droid, is in the box to calculate Podrace odds and potential winnings for his master.



Warwick Davis, who played Wicket the Ewok in *Return of the Jedi*, can be seen here as the sleazy arms dealer Weazel.





The visual-effects team reviewed footage from NASCAR crashes to get a sense for how complex machines disintegrate at high speeds.

Ben Burtt initially blocked out the Podrace action by splicing together racing footage of cars, boats, and planes. The first cut ran for 25 minutes.

To construct the full-size Podracers, Rick McCallum, production designer Gavin Bouquet, and set designer Peter Walpole bought \$60,000 of surplus aircraft parts.



There's a reason why they say that no human can pilot Podracers—Sebulba's machine can reach 829 kilometers per hour (515 mpg).



The two-headed Podrace announcer is a Trogg, a species from Pollilus. The right head is called the *saprin* and the left the *saprah*. Troggs with three or more heads are not unknown.

The Huttese-speaking head, played by comic actor Scott Capurro, offers a slightly different commentary on the Podrace events, including "We have perfect weather here today for the Boonta Classic, the most hazardous of all Podraces."







For the **Wookiee** senators, the original **Chewbacca** costume was pulled out of the Lucasfilm Archives and shot on three different actors.



**Coruscant** was first conceived by Ralph McQuarrie during development of the original trilogy, and named years later by author Timothy Zahn. Lead concept artist Doug Chiang adapted McQuarrie's 20 year-old designs for the new film (although a sneak preview was inserted at the end of the *Return of the Jedi* Special Edition).

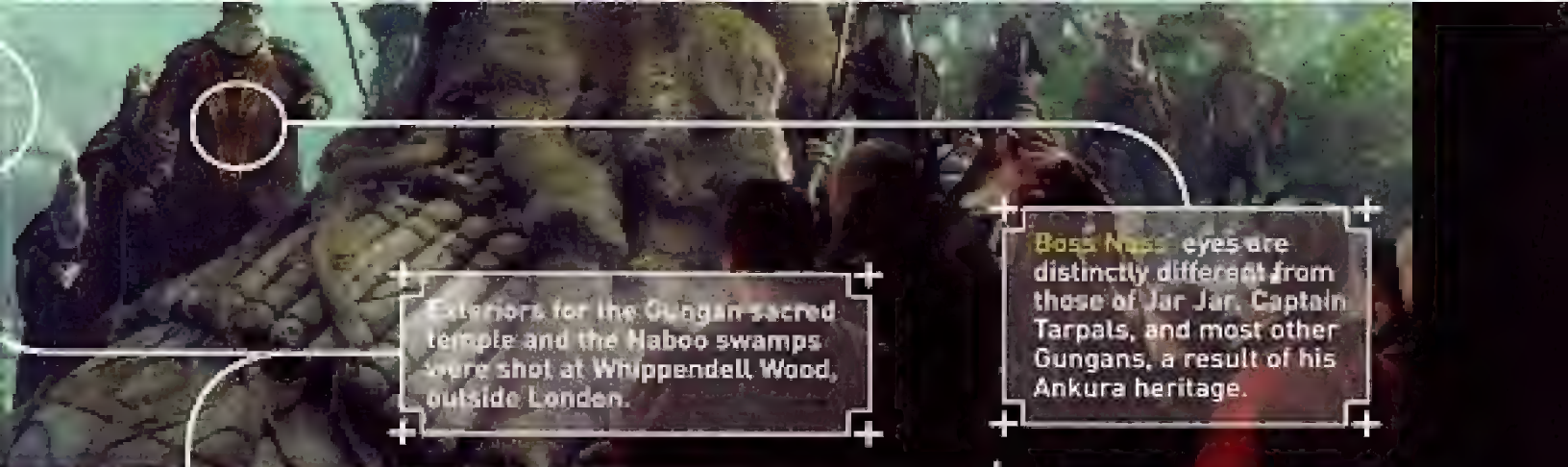
The name "**Mace Windu**" has persisted since George Lucas' original *Star Wars* story outlines, which began, "This is the story of Mace Windu, a revered Jedi-bendu of Opuchi."

According to effects supervisor Nick Dudman, Kel Dor Jedi Master Plo Koon received his name from "Plonkoon," a nickname Dudman used for his young son.



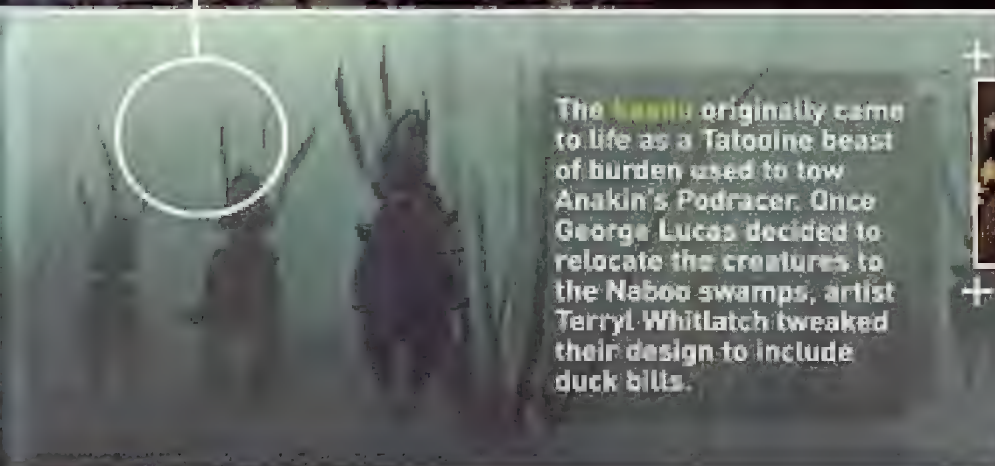
Though it isn't clear in this scene, **Oppo Rancisis'** lower body consists of a thick, snaky tail. It is seen best in issue #75 of the comic *Star Wars Republic*, which depicts Master Rancisis' death during the Siege of Saleucami.






Exteriors for the Gungan sacred temple and the Naboo swamps were shot at Whippendell Wood, outside London.


**Boss Nass'** eyes are distinctly different from those of Jar Jar, Captain Tarpals, and most other Gungans, a result of his Ankura heritage.



The **Kamru** originally came to life as a Tatooine beast of burden used to tow Anakin's Podracer. Once George Lucas decided to relocate the creatures to the Naboo swamps, artist Terryl Whitlatch tweaked their design to include duck bills.

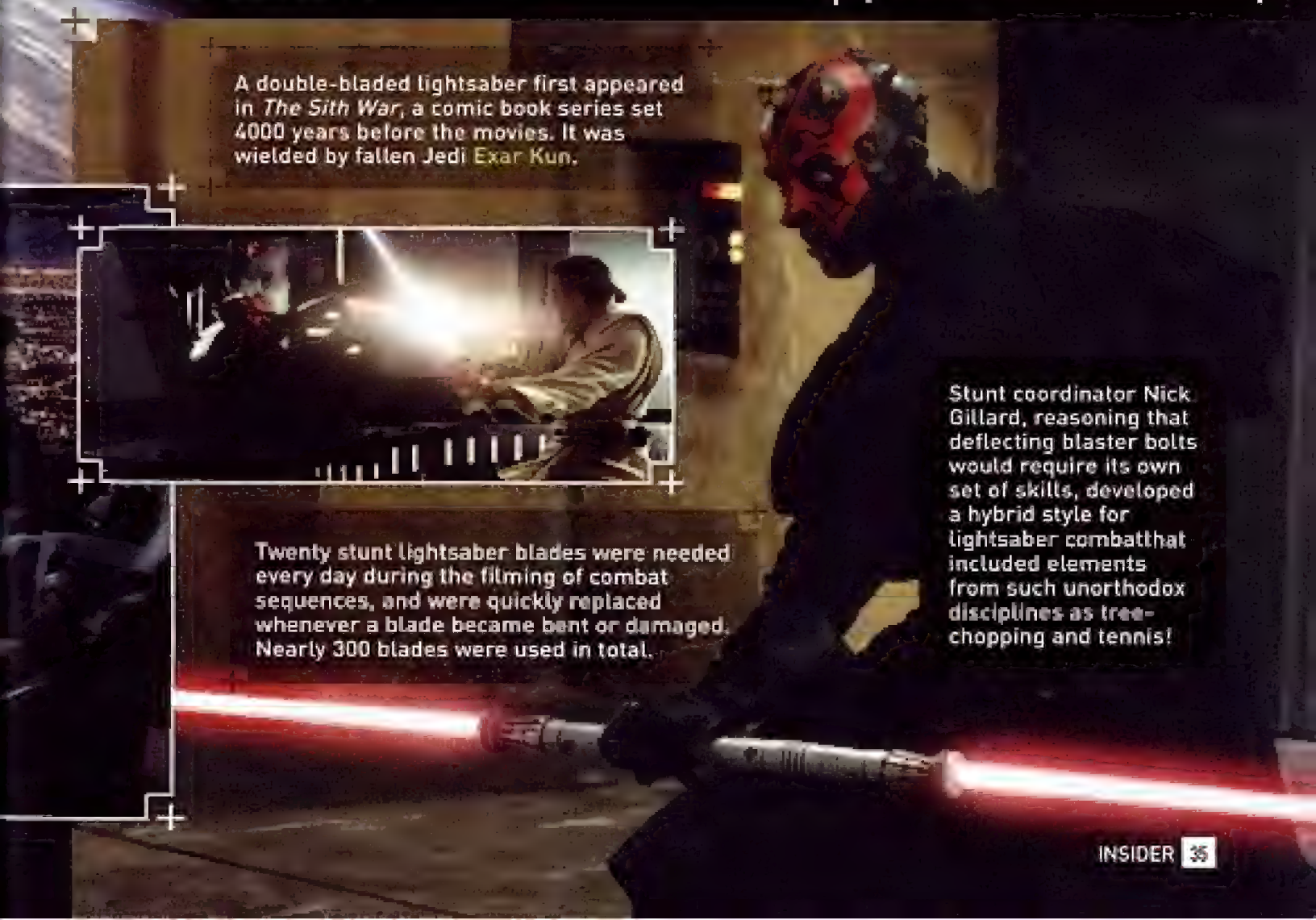


The **Security 5-5 blaster**, which features a built-in ascension line, was personally developed by Captain Panaka.



A double-bladed lightsaber first appeared in *The Sith War*, a comic book series set 4000 years before the movies. It was wielded by fallen Jedi **Exar Kun**.

Twenty stunt lightsaber blades were needed every day during the filming of combat sequences, and were quickly replaced whenever a blade became bent or damaged. Nearly 300 blades were used in total.

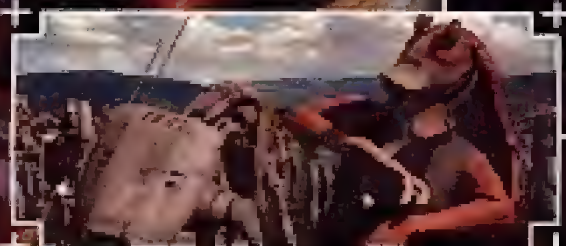


Stunt coordinator Nick Gillard, reasoning that deflecting blaster bolts would require its own set of skills, developed a hybrid style for lightsaber combat that included elements from such unorthodox disciplines as tree-chopping and tennis!



The droid that Jar Jar pushes over has a stylized number 1138 on its back, a running joke throughout the *Star Wars* films that refers to George Lucas' classic movie, *THX 1138*.

Anakin's line, "I'll try spinning, that's a good trick," is referenced in the episode "Destroy Malevolence" from *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*.



Producer Rick McCallum has a cameo here as a minor Naboo official.



This unlucky pilot is played by visual effects supervisor John Knoll.

The film's triumphal parade seems like a happy ending, but it marks Palpatine's first step toward iron-fisted galactic rule. Accordingly, the cheerful music is actually a reworking of the creepy "Emperor's Theme" from *Return of the Jedi*.



**Senate Guards** are part of a special law-enforcement branch based on Coruscant. Their blue armor bears a resemblance to the red armor of the Emperor's Royal Guards, who eventually replaced them.





# REVENGE OF THE BINKS



A DECADE AFTER EPISODE I, ACTOR AHMED BEST RECENTLY WON A MAJOR ANIMATION AWARD FOR PLAYING JAR JAR BINKS. MAYBE HE ALSO GOT THE LAST LAUGH? SCOTT CHERNOFF FINDS OUT!



**R**espect for Jar Jar Binks? It didn't look likely 10 years ago, when the gangly Gungan made his debut in *Star Wars: Episode I—The Phantom Menace*. He stood out as the first digitally-animated main character in a major motion picture, and also for being so, well, daffy.

Respect for the character appeared to fall farther in Episode II, when the naïve Naboo native, now a Senior Representative subbing for an absent Senator Amidala, proposed the motion that gave Chancellor Palpatine (Darth Sidious) unlimited political power. Oops!

It seemed that no matter how hard he tried, Jar Jar always ended up doing the wrong thing or looking foolish when he did the right thing—despite the best efforts of the multi-talented and acclaimed actor who brought him to life, Ahmed Best.

Now 35, Best—who, like Jar Jar, made his feature film debut a decade ago in *The Phantom Menace*—is finally feeling the Force function in his favor. He's shot a new film with Samuel L. Jackson and Naomi Watts, welcomed his first son into the world, and collected an Annie Award from the International Animated Film Society for Voice Acting in an Animated Television Program—and that's just in 2009! He won the award for an episode of *Robot Chicken* in which he reprised his most famous role: the goofy Gungan, Jar Jar Binks.

### JAR JAR GOES POP!

"I didn't expect to win," Best told *Star Wars Insider* shortly after the ceremony. "I always thought Jar Jar was going to live in infamy."

Even the nomination took Best by surprise—after all, the Annie is prestigious, like an Academy Award for animation, and the competition was fierce—Best was nominated against *Family Guy* creator Seth MacFarlane (for voicing series dad Peter Griffin) and Dwight Schultz, the *A-Team* legend who now plays Mung Daal on the Cartoon Network hit *Chowder*.

"I beat those two—and neither of them will probably ever hire me again because of this," Best laughs. "I can't speculate on why I won. It sounds such a cliché, but I was honored just to be nominated. I didn't think Jar Jar was ever going to win anything. I didn't write a speech, I thought Seth MacFarlane would win. I was like, 'There's no way I'm winning this award,' and then when they said my name, I thought, 'What? Do you mean me?' It was very surreal. The walk to the stage was a long one, and I still don't remember what I said. I was

just thankful that everyone recognized the work that was done on the show."

Best won for his second Jar Jar bit on *Robot Chicken*, the stop-motion animated Adult Swim series that has now produced two hilarious and hugely popular all-*Star Wars* specials. In the first one, which premiered in 2007, Best reprised Jar Jar in a brilliant sketch that found the enthusiastic, touchy-feely Gungan thrilled to reunite with a none-too-happy Darth Vader, whom Jar Jar still calls "Annie." He then won an Annie for his performance in a sketch in the 2008 special that found Jar Jar appearing as a celebrity pitchman in a TV commercial spoof. (He's done a few other voices on *Robot Chicken* as well, including an AT-AT driver and voiced a quick line as Darth Maul.)

Best had nothing but praise for the creative team behind *Robot Chicken*, Seth Green and Matt Senreich: "They're doing cutting edge stuff. They're so funny. I think Seth Green is going to be a very big director one day. He said to me, 'I think we're rehabilitating Jar Jar in pop culture.' I said, 'I certainly hope so. I don't get a lot of respect in the sci-fi world for Jar Jar.'"

That wasn't always a great feeling for a guy who grew up a devoted *Star Wars* fan. "I still want to be Han Solo," Best admits. "When I saw *A New Hope*, I was maybe three or four, and I loved the mythology of it, seeing the swords and the fights—I fell in love with that. Then when I saw *Empire*, it was the first epic movie that I was a fan of. I understood the struggle, I understood the characters. I think it stands up as one of my favorite movie of all time."

**"IT WAS VERY SURREAL. THE WALK TO THE STAGE WAS A LONG ONE, AND I STILL DON'T REMEMBER WHAT I SAID."**

Ahmed Best (right) shares a joke with Ewan McGregor, Rick McCallum and George Lucas on the *Star Wars* set.







## STOMPING TO SUCCESS!

Being a lifelong *Star Wars* fan, Best was blown away when George Lucas chose him for the first new *Star Wars* movie in 16 years, *The Phantom Menace*. Then 23, he had been performing in the Broadway blockbuster *Stomp* when Episode I casting director Robin Gurland spotted him in the show and summoned him for an audition based on Best's unique and creative physicality onstage. Her hunch—that Best's physicality would be the perfect basis for the digitally animated character her boss had in mind—was confirmed when Lucas cast him after a motion capture audition.

"When I showed up," he recalls, "I was like, 'Do they realize I'm not supposed to be here? I'm just a kid from the Bronx.' The learning curve was pretty big for me, going from a Broadway show to one of the biggest movies of all time. But I couldn't be afraid. I knew I had to completely believe in George Lucas."

That meant believing in Lucas' vision for the character who would be animated literally on top of Best. On the set, the actor wore a makeshift Jar Jar suit and tall headpiece, so his fellow cast mates would have a real actor to interact with, and most importantly, so the artists at ILM would have a human reference. Beyond providing Jar Jar's distinctive voice, Best's performance was also the inspiration for Jar Jar's movements. Back in the late-1990s, it was something that had never been done before.

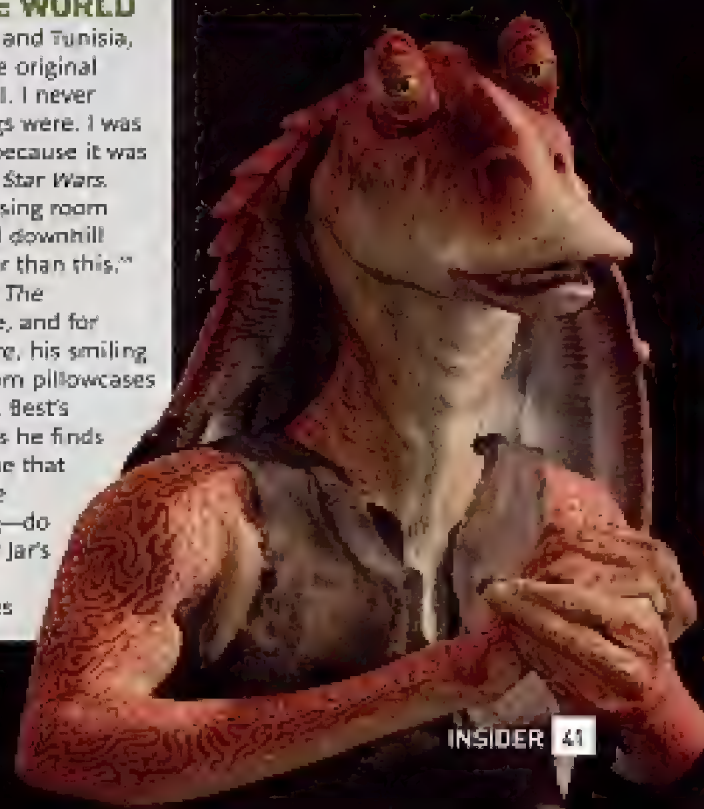
"It wasn't just doing *Star Wars*, which was enormous, but it was actually taking this risk," he says. "It was making film history as the first all digitally-animated [main] character in a live-action movie. To set the template for that was the most exciting thing for me. Following that, Andy Serkis did it for Gollum (in *The Lord of the Rings*), but being the first guy to do it was really important to me. I take a lot of pride in that. It's not recognized very much, but I'm very proud that I was the first person to take that risk."

## JAR JAR ACROSS THE WORLD

Shooting Episode I in England and Tunisia, near the locations used for the original *A New Hope* was "very surreal. I never really processed how big things were. I was just going along for the ride, because it was my first major film and it was *Star Wars*. I remember sitting in the dressing room one-day thinking, 'Well, it's all downhill from here. You can't get bigger than this.'"

Indeed, the anticipation for *The Phantom Menace* was massive, and for a while, Jar Jar was everywhere, his smiling visage adorning everything from pillowcases to soda cans. Not surprisingly, Best's personal favorites are the ones he finds the funniest. "There were some that were absolutely ridiculous," he laughs, "like the lollipop thing—do you remember that? It was Jar Jar's face and then as soon as the mouth opens, a lollipop comes

**"GEORGE IS TELLING ME, 'BIGGER, FUNNIER, JUMP HIGHER,' SO I HAVE TO BE ENORMOUS IN THE SCENE AND LIAM [NEESON] IS DOING ALMOST NOTHING."**





## "WHO WANTS TO EAT A JAR JAR TONGUE FRUIT ROLL-UP?"

shooting out like a tongue. I was thinking, 'This thing is not good, man! Somebody needs to re-think this!'

"There was Jar Jar saturation," he continues, noting a curious amount of Binks merchandise that, like the lollipop, seemed centered around Jar Jar's tongue. "The tongue was a big deal. Some of the merchandise was crazy. Who wants to eat a Jar Jar tongue Fruit Roll-Up?"

But make no mistake: Ahmed Best remains a fan and declares that, a decade on, *The Phantom Menace* still holds up. "It came on cable the other day, and I was watching it and thinking, 'This movie is a good movie.' As a piece of film, as a story, it works fantastically. It is well done, well thought out, well executed, and it sets up the trilogy very well. My favorite person in the movie is Liam Neeson. He's so good in it—you didn't want Qui-Gon to die."

The Oscar-nominated Neeson was just as impressive on the set—although his co-star didn't realize it at first. "I would watch Liam while we were acting and it didn't look like he was doing very much," Best says. "Honestly, I didn't see him doing anything. Liam has this soft demeanor about him. I had to be huge. George is telling me, 'Bigger, funnier, jump higher,' so I have to be enormous in the scene and Liam is doing almost nothing."

"But when I looked at the playback on the monitor, I thought, 'This is amazing—this guy is doing more stuff than I'm doing with a back flip.' He was like a Film Acting 101 course for me. He'd move his eyebrow and it would mean 10 times more than me

doing three flips in the water. He was the person I learned most from on-set—I really enjoyed watching him and learning from him, and hearing his stories. We laughed a lot. It was great."

### UNDERWATER ACTION!

Along those lines, Best said one of his favorite Episode I memories is of himself and Neeson, along with Ewan McGregor, filming their scene in the tri-bubble bongo submarine after leaving Otoh Gunga. "That was one of the funniest days," Best recalls. "Your imagination daydreams about what shooting *Star Wars* is going to be like, and you think, 'Oh, there's going to be a starship, and we're going to walk into it, and there's going to be all this high tech stuff moving around, and ships flying at you.' But we get in the ship, and there are two Englishmen shaking it back and forth on sticks. It was the most low-tech experience that you could have!"

Best said the day devolved into silliness for everyone. "Here was big Liam in the back seat of this big old submarine and Ewan and me in the front seat pretending to swim through the ocean, and so many ridiculous lines that I didn't know what they meant—nobody knew what they meant because it was in gibberish Jar Jar speech. So I go to George and ask, 'Hey George, what does this mean?' And he goes, 'I don't know—just say it!' I'm like, 'What? Didn't you write this?' Shooting that submarine scene is one of my fondest memories."

The good times translated to Best's performance as the most overtly comedic





*Colbert Report*, on which Best also played Binks. "Jar Jar really works for comedy, which is what it was all about in the beginning. People took it a little seriously. We were just trying to be funny."

Of *Robot Chicken* viewers, he says, "They're like, 'Well, thankfully he can take the self-importance out of the character. But you know, I never really took the whole thing too seriously, even with all the criticism. At the end of the day, I'm an actor who did my job, and if George Lucas is happy, then I am too. It's his vision, it's his story, it's his folklore, and as an actor, I want to make the director's vision a reality. If I did that, I'm happy, period.'"

Clearly, George Lucas was very happy, inviting Best back for Episodes II and III. In *Attack of the Clones*, Jar Jar is promoted to Gungan Senior Representative in the Galactic Senate, where he fills in for Senator Amidala and gets used as a pawn by Chancellor Palpatine in a power play that ultimately results in the Emperor taking over the galaxy. "I've always wanted that storyline to get explored," Best muses.

#### UNMASKED!

Shooting the next two movies was a little easier since the production team had refined the process of creating Jar Jar so

character in the *Star Wars* canon. "It felt like a Buster Keaton kind of role," Best says of the beloved silent film comedian who influenced him. "I was trying to channel that kind of energy to the character."

However, some fans and critics were not amused. "They really wanted to see a dark, serious story. They had their expectations."

The backlash hit hard. "It was so shocking because we were all very excited while we were doing it," Best says, adding, "But Jar Jar was never for 35-year-olds. He was for the six-year-olds. So among six-to-10 year olds, I am incredibly popular."

Best notes that when kids find out he played Jar Jar Binks, "They go bananas! They go crazy! Recently, my nephew, who is four years old now, saw *Star Wars*, and he saw my name on the screen and he asked, 'Why is Uncle Ahmed on the screen? Who was he?' My sister told him that Uncle Ahmed was Jar Jar, and now I'm a hero. He didn't want to have anything to do with me before that. The magic of George Lucas helped me be cool with my nephew."

Best has observed that Jar Jar's fans seem to be those who are able to laugh along with the saga, like the creators and fans of *Robot Chicken*, or Comedy Central's *The*

## "SETH GREEN SAID TO ME, 'I THINK WE'RE REHABILITATING JAR JAR IN POP CULTURE.'"





that the actor could don a less cumbersome Jar Jar costume while on camera. "They knew how to shoot him, I didn't have to wear as much of the Jar Jar suit—just the arms and the head, and then in Episode III, I didn't even need to wear that. That was just me in a big cloak, and they animated the head on top of it."

But despite Jar Jar's scaled-down role, Lucas paid tribute to Best, along with Anthony Daniels, the *Star Wars* icon behind C-3PO, by casting them both—unmasked—as denizens of the Outlander Club on Coruscant. His character, named Achk Med-Beg, was soon immortalized as an action figure. "My mom has it," he confesses, adding, "I don't have one and she won't let me have it!"

Best also reprised his role in the eighth episode of the most recent saga incarnation, *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*. "I really enjoy the episodes on Cartoon Network, and I think Jar Jar is great for that show," he says. "I always thought he should have had his own kids' show, an animated series."

Best is cagey about whether or not he would return to *The Clone Wars*, considering that another actor, B.J. Hughes, voiced the character in a subsequent episode because Best was busy with other projects. "If they ask me to do it again, I'll think about it. I love doing animation. I love the process. I love the story of *Star Wars*. I was just at a point where I was like, 'You know what, I did this and let me see what else is out there.'"

### MACE WINDU....BINKS?

When Best spoke to *Insider*, he was still shooting the movie *Mother and Child*, a drama starring Naomi Watts, Annette Bening, Kerry Washington, and fellow *Star Wars* alum Samuel L. Jackson.

"I play Sam Jackson's son," Best reveals. "Ironically, isn't it? I should have done that in Episode I. Mace Windu Binks—that would really make some people mad!"

Also appearing in the film is Jimmy Smits of Episodes II and III, making *Mother and Child* something of a *Star Wars* reunion. "We pretty much just kind of recognize that we were all in it and chuckle about it," Best says. "I see Sam quite a lot around town and he's real cool. Every time I see him, he introduces me with, 'This is Ahmed, aka Jar Jar!' And I'm like, 'Yo, Sam, you don't have to do that anymore,' as much as I dig it."

But while he's done some acting since moving to Los Angeles a year after the release of Episode I, Best has been focusing most of his efforts behind the camera.

"Since I moved out to L.A., I've been doing more producing and directing than anything else," he says. He started by



**"PEOPLE TOOK  
IT A LITTLE  
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WE WERE  
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**"I'VE LEARNED A LOT OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS. JUST BEING IN *STAR WARS* OPENS DOORS FOR ME. IT'S A GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING."**

executive-producing the anthology series *The DL Chronicles*, which ran on the cable network *Here! TV* in 2005, and spent 2008 working on *This Can't Be My Life*, a sitcom he directed, produced, and co-wrote for the internet, featuring guest appearances from actresses Rosario Dawson (*Sin City*) and Tracie Thoms (TV's *Cold Case* and *Wonderfalls*). He's shopping the show, starring his friend, comedienne Shellynn Wactor, to TV but releasing it initially on YouTube.

## DREAM PROJECT

Now, Best is working on his dream project. "I'm doing an all-black science fiction show called *The Nebula*. I'm a huge sci-fi guy. I really love it. I play a captain with the Shatner swagger and the rebel Han Solo attitude."

Best created, produces, and directs the show, which will come in two forms: a web series set on a starship, and a hoped-for TV series in the vein of *The Office*, about the making of the web show. Both are comedies, and Best has already shot one episode with guest

Clowning around with stunt co-comedian Nick Gilardi



star Seth Green. "He came and just destroyed us all! He was absolutely unbelievable. And then the next episode is hopefully going to have LeVar Burton from *Star Trek: The Next Generation* which is going to be a very interesting cross-platform *Star Wars*-*Star Trek* hybrid. LeVar heard about it and wanted to be a part of it. I think it's something really special. I hope George likes it."

*The Nebula* will also, like his other projects, feature original music by Best himself, an accomplished musician who released three albums with the group The Jazzhole, and currently plays with rock band The United Kings of Scotland and a funk/jazz combo called The Screaming Headless Torsos. "I go under a bunch of different pseudonyms. So you'll hear it and not know it's me. I've found that works really well in my case."

Could that be because some people just won't take Jar Jar seriously? Not according to Ahmed Best, who said he's got nothing but gratitude for his part in the *Star Wars* universe. Thinking back on the intimidating Episode I release 10

years ago, he says, "I had a great time with it. I enjoyed going to all the premieres and meeting all the folks. I took it all in my stride. I wanted it to be the beginning of a long career. And it was. And it still is."

Talking to the *Insider* just five days after his wife Raquel gave birth to their first child, son Marley Ellington, Best continues, "I've learned a lot over the last 10 years. Just being in *Star Wars* opens doors for me. It's a gift that keeps on giving. I have to thank Jar Jar for my house. I have Jar Jar to thank for the fact that I can support my wife and now my son. If I didn't have Jar Jar in my life, none of these things would have come as quickly, but because George Lucas saw a kid from the Bronx as somebody to make film history, I've got to give thanks. That's pretty huge."

Now that's deserving of some respect. ☺

## EXPANDED UNIVERSE >>>

For more information on Ahmed Best's videos and music, go to [myspace.com/ahmedbestmusic](http://myspace.com/ahmedbestmusic).





AS STARPILOT RIC OLIÉ IN THE PHANTOM MENACE ENGLISH ACTOR RALPH BROWN PLAYED A PART IN THE BATTLE OF NABOO AND TAUGHT A CERTAIN YOUNG JEDI THE RUDIMENTS OF SPACEFLIGHT!

# SKY HIGH:

THE MAN WHO TAUGHT VADER TO FLY!

WORDS: JONATHAN WILKINS



**Star Wars Insider:** How did you get the part of Ric Olié?

**Ralph Brown:** I met the casting director, Robin Gurland, at Leavesden Studios and auditioned. I originally went in to audition for the voices of some of the creatures. I did a number of different voices, and we had quite a laugh messing around. A week later I was offered the part of Ric Olié in the movie.

**Did you get any say in the costume?**

**Absolutely none whatsoever!** I thought the costume was really good, though. I did get a say in my hairstyle. I decided to be blonde, and have really white hair. I dyed it before we started filming so I could get used to it. The trouble was, I looked a bit like a particularly evil baddie! The make up department had to dye my hair back to the color it is in the film.

**What was the atmosphere like on set?**

There was a hushed reverence around George Lucas, as you'd expect. The Industrial Light & Magic guys were always there with all their gizmos measuring things alongside George and his assistants, and the rest of the crew were Brits.



**You have worked with George Lucas and Steven Spielberg, how would you compare the two as directors?**

I appeared in Steven Spielberg's film *Amistad*, which was my next job after *The Phantom Menace*. They're very different filmmakers indeed, I know they're similar in other ways; but in terms of the work, they're very different directors.

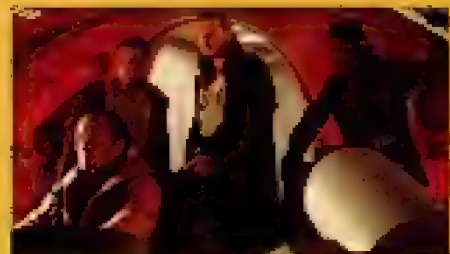
Steven Spielberg is a hands-on kind of director wandering around the set and acting as if he's always trying to get things moving along, with people fluttering around in his wake. He's very chatty and energized, whereas George was quiet and very laid back. He always waited patiently for everything to be ready before he called "Action!"



THE MAN WHO TAUGHT VADER TO FLY



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**"THERE WAS A HUSHED REVERENCE AROUND GEORGE LUCAS, AS YOU'D EXPECT."**

Do you agree with the criticism that George Lucas isn't an actors' director? I think every director is an actors' director. With movies like *Star Wars*, you just have to embrace it, at a performance level, in a particular way. I'd grown up with *Star Trek* and watched William Shatner and Leonard Nimoy speaking with absolute and utter sincerity about faintly ludicrous scenarios. There's ways of saying those lines, which is to say them with utter conviction and sincerity, which makes them resonate. If you aren't prepared to do that, you shouldn't be doing films in this genre, really. Some directors just let you get on with it. Other directors prefer, for their own reasons, to talk to the actors all day. George doesn't. He'll talk to you if you talk to him, but that's just his style. You're hired to do a job for him and you shouldn't be asking how to do it every five minutes. Some actors want patting on the back, and they want little treats every now and again. Sometimes you have to get used to living without them.





# "SEEING MY FACE ON A CAN OF MOUNTAIN DEW WAS WEIRD!"

You had some scenes with young Jake Lloyd in which Ric Olié teaches him to fly.

Yeah, I guess I gave Darth Vader his first flying lesson! He was a cute kid. He was bright as a button as kids that age are. I've got a nephew the same age and they're just good company.

Were you happy with the likeness of your action figure?

I thought it was pretty good, actually. It was quite strange to see a three-inch version of myself that actually looked like me! In fact, it still does! Because I didn't have a huge amount of makeup in the film and no prosthetics, it was my face and body. I have one at home. I've been given some more, at conventions. The *Star Wars* fans are very generous.

Where's the weirdest place you've seen your image?

Seeing my face on a can of Mountain Dew was probably the weirdest. I think we were a part of a Taco Bell promotion as well, which I used to enjoy eating at in America, but the Mountain Dew can was an odd one. I thought, perhaps that I was finally really famous, but it was just a passing shadow on a Mountain Dew can! My face was all over the world for a few months when the movie was first released, along with the rest of the cast.

Would you like to appear in the *Star Wars* live action TV show or *The Clone Wars* animated series?

Yes, absolutely I would be interested. I wasn't in the following films, so it would be interesting to find out what Ric's been up to! ☺



## WHATEVER HAPPENED TO.... Ric Olié

Following the victory at the Battle of Naboo, Ric Olié gained considerable fame with *Bravo Flight*. His whereabouts during the Clone Wars are unknown, but young Anakin Skywalker, who got his first taste of flying under the guidance of the kindly starpilot, went on to become a great hero of the conflict.

### EXPANDED UNIVERSE >>>

Ralph Brown is a member of the Brighton Beach Boys who are playing May 22 and 23 in St Georges Church, Brighton, U.K. as part of the Brighton Festival. He can next be seen on the big screen in *The Beat That Rocks*, a film about British pirate radio in the 1960s, a movie that mirrors Brown's love of music and acting.







# MORE MENACE!

JASON FRY EXPLORES HOW EPISODE I KICKED  
OFF AN EXPANDED UNIVERSE BONANZA!

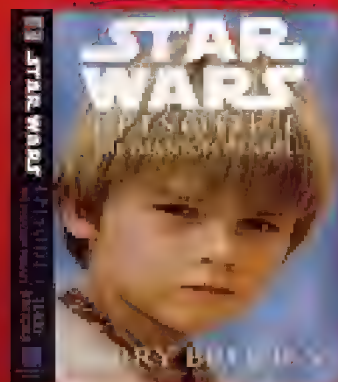
**T**en years ago, *Star Wars'* Expanded Universe was thriving. The ever-growing collection of novels, comics, videogames, and other stories set in a galaxy far, far away had built on George Lucas' beloved trilogy of space fantasies, telling tales of Jedi, Sith Lords, bounty hunters, heroes, villains, and rogues. Readers had followed the adventures of Luke Skywalker, Princess Leia, and Han Solo as the saga continued beyond *Return of the Jedi*, when they'd battled Grand Admirals bent on restoring the Empire's galactic dominance. They'd gone between the films, following Lando Calrissian and Chewbacca on the hunt for Han Solo after *The Empire Strikes Back*—a mission that would take them to the galaxy's capital, Coruscant, and a Coruscant and a confrontation with the galaxy's most-feared crimelord. And they'd explored the epic battles of the ancient Jedi Knights and their galaxy-spanning clashes with the Sith.

But everything was about to change. The Expanded Universe was about to get a shot of storytelling adrenaline from the creator himself.

The May 1999 release of *The Phantom Menace* not only brought *Star Wars* back to theaters, but also opened up a whole new era for authors and artists to explore—one that they'd previously had to steer clear of, for fear of stepping on the prequels' storylines. The Jedi Knights had been mysterious figures; now, a wealth of information about them was revealed, from how apprentices (properly called Padawans, we now knew) were selected and trained, to how the highest-ranking Jedi decided the Order's affairs. The Senate had only been known for being dissolved by the Emperor in Episode IV, and that had happened off-screen; now, we had a ringside seat for their deliberations in the dizzying halls of Coruscant. There were two new Sith—and the surprising news that "Darth" wasn't a name at all, but a title. And there were Podraces and new species and much, much more.



Anakin ran afoul of Sebulba in earlier Podraces and nursed a battered Tusken Raider back to health in the Tatooine desert.



If it doesn't seem like Episode I can really be a decade old, perhaps that's because *Star Wars* has been such a busy place since then, with the completion of the prequel trilogy, an epic series of novels plunging the post-Episode VI galaxy back into war, comics set generations after the films, and now weekly tales of the Clone Wars on TV. It's a lot to take in—and it all got a kick-start back in 1999. So, without further ado, let's take a tour of the Expanded Universe immediately after Episode I.

#### FILLING IN THE BLANKS!

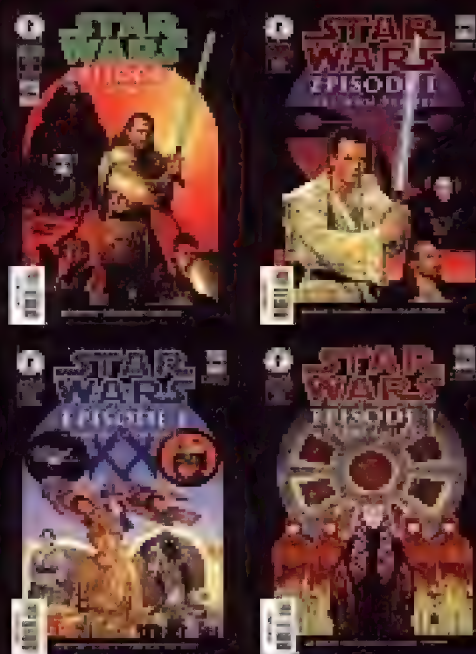
The first sign that Episode I would make the *Star Wars* saga much richer came with the Del Rey novelization of Episode I: *The Phantom Menace*. Written by veteran fantasy author Terry Brooks, it hit bookshelves about a month before the long-awaited movie. That would have been exciting enough, but Brooks' novelization included a lot of additional material not seen in the movie that was, in fact, created especially for the book. Readers got a look at Anakin Skywalker prior to his fateful meeting with Qui-Gon and Padmé. He ran afoul of Sebulba in earlier Podraces and nursed a battered Tusken Raider back to health in the Tatooine desert. And fans learned *Star Wars* lore imparted to Brooks by George Lucas himself—most notably how the Sith had come to be, and then hidden themselves away, fooling their Jedi rivals into believing they were extinct.

Other stories would shine light into other neglected corners of the story told onscreen in the spring of 1999. Scholastic contributed a pair of young-adult books retelling the events of Episode I as if they were the diaries of Anakin Skywalker and

Queen Amidala. Anakin's included a memory of finding an ancient war droid whose memory preserved a recording of a battle with the Sith, while Amidala's delved deeper into the disguises she wore and deceptions she practiced with her handmaidens. Amidala's and Darth Maul's journals were written by Jude Watson, from whom we'd hear quite a bit after Episode I. Very young readers weren't left out either—DK's *Step Into Reading* series included *Anakin's Pit Droid*, the tale of a brave mechanical who saved the day before the Boonta Eve race, and *Anakin to the Rescue*, which featured a side trip for Anakin and Jar Jar Binks on Coruscant.

Comics had always played a part in expanding the *Star Wars* saga and this continued with the release of the new movie. In addition to offering an adaptation of Episode I (written by Henry Gilroy, now a principal writer on *The Clone Wars* TV series), Dark Horse Comics told tales of what Padmé, Qui-Gon, Obi-Wan and Anakin were up to while our attention was elsewhere during *The Phantom Menace*. Qui-Gon's story, written by Ryder Windham and illustrated by Robert Teranishi, is particularly compelling. (The stories were later collected as a trade paperback called *Episode I Adventures*.)

Perhaps the strangest tale to fill in an Episode I blank was *The Queen's Amulet*, a Chronicle Books title that came packaged with a plastic amulet. In the book, Padmé and Sabé search the Theed meadowlands for the aforementioned amulet, return to the palace for the briefing about the Neimoidian threat we see onscreen, and then switch identities in time to be rescued by Obi-Wan and Qui-Gon.







**Dark Horse dived eagerly into the fray, bringing Jedi who had little to do but sit in meetings in Episode I to lightsaber-swinging life!**

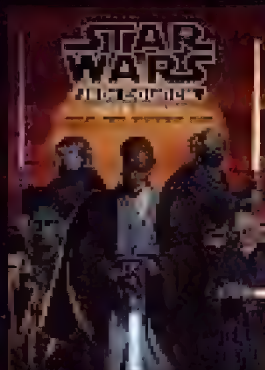
#### JEDI IN ACTION

Shortly before *The Phantom Menace* hit theaters, Scholastic released the first two volumes of a new series for kids, called *Jedi Apprentice*. The first, penned by veteran *Star Wars* author Dave Wolverton, told how Obi-Wan Kenobi became Qui-Gon Jinn's apprentice, after it seemed he was fated not to become a Jedi at all. Those were surprising revelations, which made fans eager to pick up the second book, Jude Watson's *The Dark Rival*. Nobody knew it at the time, but Watson would become one of the most-prolific *Star Wars* authors, penning nearly 50 *Star Wars* books in all, most of them part of a remarkable extended tale about five generations of Jedi Masters and Padawans, from Yoda to Dooku to Qui-Gon to Obi-Wan to Anakin. *Jedi Apprentice* chronicled the evolving relationship between Qui-Gon and Obi-Wan before giving way to *Jedi Quest*, which told the story of Obi-Wan and Anakin, and then *Last of the Jedi*, which saw Obi-Wan and Ferus Olin struggle to keep the Jedi flame alive after the horrors of *Revenge of the Sith*. Watson wasn't alone in exploring the Jedi of the late Republic. Dark Horse dived eagerly into the fray, bringing Jedi who had little to do but sit in meetings in Episode I to lightsaber-swinging life! The cone-headed Ki-Adi-Mundi went first, in *Prelude*

#### MORE MAUL!

An instantly iconic character in the movie was Darth Maul, the horned, tattooed Sith apprentice played by martial-arts whiz Ray Park and voiced by Peter Serafinowicz in startling fashion. (When you first saw Maul, did you think he'd sound like an English lord? Me neither.)

Maul was largely absent from the early post-Episode I books, no doubt to preserve the character's mystery. And of course the inconvenient bisection of the character by Obi-Wan Kenobi's lightsaber meant he couldn't have adventures set after Episode I. (Though later authors have managed to bring him back to life, at least from a certain point of view.) But in time, Maul would have his day and some of his sinister secrets were revealed. He got his own first-person diary from Scholastic, giving the reader a look at his ruthless training under Darth Sidious. Maul prequels were soon in happy supply: Dark Horse pitted him against Black Sun operatives in a series with the need-you-know-more title of *Darth Maul*, gloriously illustrated by Jan Duursema. Del Rey's Michael Reaves sent Maul through the bowels of Coruscant on a mission for his master in the novel *Darth Maul: Shadow Hunter*, which serves as a prequel of sorts for Reaves' recent *Coruscant Nights* trilogy. (As an added bonus, the paperback includes a Maul e-book by James Luceno.) Ryder Windham would devote a volume of Scholastic's *Episode I Adventures* book series to Maul, pairing him with the bounty hunter droid C-3PX. (The Scholastic series switched authors over its 15-book lifespan, with other adventures starring Qui-Gon and Obi-Wan, a pre-Episode I Anakin, and even Jar Jar.)





**Star Wars Tales** relaxed continuity rules to let artists and writers try stories that wouldn't fit into the regular timelines.

to *Rebellion* and *Outlander*, with other members of the Jedi Council seeing action in *Emissaries to Malastare*, which came complete with a Podrace and a Sebulba cameo. In later series, Dark Horse would create a complicated Jedi hero from an character seen briefly in the background as Sebulba is throttling Jar Jar during Episode I. Quinlan Vos would then find his way back into the films: He's mentioned in Episode III, and his Padawan Aayla Secura got roles in that movie and Episode II, as well as in *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*, which also revealed she has a rather winning "French" accent.

As Episode II approached, Dark Horse brought back Qui-Gon and Obi-Wan for new Jedi tales offering a broad galactic sweep and ensemble casts: *The Stark Hyperspace War*, written by John Ostrander, was a story of Trade Federation deceit that nicely foreshadowed Episode I, while *Jedi Council: Acts of War* (written by Randy Stradley) includes some fancy flying by the horned Jedi Master Saesee Tiin and cameos by Darths Maul and Sidious.

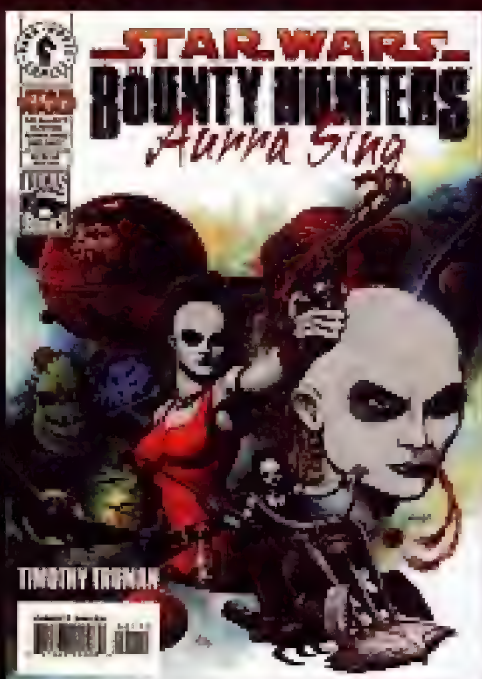
The year 1999 also saw Dark Horse try something new: *Star Wars Tales*, which relaxed continuity rules to let artists and writers try stories that wouldn't fit in the regular timelines, as well as some that fit fine. The first issue featured a terrific tale of Qui-Gon and Obi-Wan: Jim Woodring's "Life, Death and the Living Force" is by turns philosophical and frightening. Another memorable post-Episode I *Star Wars Tale* was "Yaddle's Tale: The One Below," which explains how Yaddle—the female of Yoda's still unnamed species—became a Jedi Master. (It appears in the Volume 2 trade paperback.)

### SING STAR!

Aurra Sing is a popular figure in the Expanded Universe. The bald, Goth bounty hunter is seen only briefly watching the Podrace in Episode I. Dark Horse gave Sing a back-story as a failed Padawan turned assassin, and pitted her against the Jedi in adventures such as *The Hunt for Aurra Sing*, as well as giving her a nicely

villainous turn in a Tim Truman standalone story. (It's collected in the *Bounty Hunters* trade paperback.)

Fan scuttlebutt at the time was that Sing would have a bigger role in Episode II. That never happened, but the bounty hunter would live on as an Expanded Universe favorite, teaming up with a young Boba Fett, hunting rogue Jedi on post-Episode III Coruscant and showing up—older but still capably nasty—to bedevil Han and Leia Organa Solo in the *Legacy of the Force* series. And if you think you've seen the last of Aurra, just wait.





Fan scuttlebutt at the time was that Sing would have a bigger role in Episode II. That never happened, but the bounty hunter would live on as an Expanded Universe favorite.



### BRIDGING THE GAPS

The two most ambitious stories to appear after Episode I filled narrative gaps in the overall saga. *Rogue Planet*, by the noted science fiction author Greg Bear, appeared in May 2000 and was set three years after Episode I, with Anakin a troubled apprentice with a habit of sneaking off to the seamy parts of Coruscant to compete in garbage-pit races.

In time, a mission took Anakin and Obi-Wan to the strange planet of Zonama Sekot, where they encountered an ambitious Republic commander named Tarkin, while Anakin confronted the darkness with himself. (If the name "Zonama Sekot" sounds familiar, it should—elements of *Rogue Planet* are key to the *New Jedi Order* series.)

*Cloak of Deception*, penned by James Luceno and released in May 2001, was a prequel to Episode I, showing Darth Sidious weaving his web around the Trade Federation and Chancellor Valorum as Qui-Gon and Obi-Wan unravel a plot that extends further than they can possibly know. That was enough to pique fans' interest even before they learned that Luceno had been given access to the screenplay and concept art for Episode II, allowing him to create a true "bridge novel" in a way that had never been tried in the Expanded Universe before. *Cloak of Deception* would deepen the story of both movies. And, of course, it whet fans' appetite for *Attack of the Clones*—which would offer still more new ground for authors and artists to explore. 🍷

### QUEENS AND GUNGANS

Padmé Amidala's story was largely put on hold after Episode I, with a couple of exceptions—the DK book *Queen in Disguise* showed Padmé and her handmaidens in training, while *Star Wars Tales* featured "A Summer's Dream," a story of lost love from Padmé's youth. (You can find it, along with "Yaddle's Tale," in the Volume 2 paperback.)

But if Naboo's human inhabitants were fairly scarce after Episode I, the Gungans did get some ink—and a sympathetic author in Ryder Windham. Windham's "The Death of Captain Tarpals" (find it in *Star Wars Tales* Volume 1) told how Jar Jar got himself banished from Otoh Gunga. Windham then made the klutzy Gungan the star of four of Scholastic's Episode I Adventures, with Jar Jar running afoul of space pirates, war droids, Boss Nass and, of course, himself in stories set before *The Phantom Menace*.



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# CHARACTER BUILDING



**ROB COLEMAN'S ROLE AS ANIMATION DIRECTOR ON *STAR WARS: EPISODE I THE PHANTOM MENACE* SAW HIM RESPONSIBLE FOR THE WEIRD AND WONDERFUL CREATURES THAT POPULATED THE MOVIE. IT WAS A CHALLENGE THAT PROVED NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE.**

**WORDS: JONATHAN WILKINS**

**Star Wars Insider:** When you joined Industrial Light & Magic in 1993 were you hoping to work on the new *Star Wars* trilogy?

**Rob Coleman:** Actually, no. Even though we'd heard about George Lucas talking about another trilogy when the first one came out, a new movie was not on my mind when I joined ILM. Around 1996 he came by for an assembly in the main theater, and he shared with us that he was going to start writing the second trilogy. I remember sitting at the back of the theater thinking, "Whoah! That's pretty cool!" I didn't decide then that I wanted to go for that job. When *Men In Black* came out in 1997, I heard through Jim Morris [head of ILM at that time] that George really liked my work on that. I found out that they wanted me to fly over to London because they were in pre-production at Leavesden, and they were considering me to be the animation director on the new *Star Wars* movie.

Was it a daunting project to be involved in?

I was asked to spend 10 days with George—it was a 10-day interview. Even though I was working for his company ILM, I had to demonstrate to Rick [McCallum] and George that I was the right person for the job, and that involved speaking when I was spoken to, answering questions articulately enough, and showing that I had a personality that matched George's. I ended up ticking all those boxes. I found it very easy to be with George. I was terrified more about the job than of him, because it had dawned on me that I remembered what it was like to be 19 and wanting to see another *Star Wars* movie. I recall coming back after I'd been told that I had the job and the insomnia started. I was thinking about everyone on the planet who's been waiting for a *Star Wars* movie, and now I'm the animation director.

I remember for a couple of months not really sleeping very well and it was way worse than butterflies in the stomach—it was full-on panic! I remember getting to a point where I actually went to George and told him about the pressure of the world waiting for this movie. He said, "What are you talking about? You have one person to make happy—me! If you make me happy, it's on my shoulders." He added, "I'm happy. Everything you're doing is great, so just calm down." I went home and slept like a baby!

**What does an animation director do?** The animation director is responsible for supervising all of the digital characters in the film. I represented a team of actors that were bringing the digital characters, like Jar Jar, Watto, and Sebulba, to life. George would present a scene to me, for example Watto's junkyard—which







was the first sequence we did for the film—and he would talk me through what he wanted. He had filmed the rehearsal of Andy Secombe [the voice of Watto], so I could see his facial expressions and body motion. He turned the scene over to me and then it was my responsibility to pull one cohesive performance out of a team of five or 10 animators who were working on the character of Watto. It was also my responsibility to present that work to George as a work in progress, moving towards a final version and its inclusion in the film.

**Can you recall your initial thoughts on seeing the script—did it seem achievable at that time?**

Not at all! Once we came back from the shoot, we then went into production at ILM. Chrissie England, who was producing for us, would have Wednesday lunchtime supervisors meetings with myself, Dennis Muren, John Knoll, and John Squires. There was a single line on the discussion: "Can we get the movie done?" For six months the answer was "No." Any way we looked at it, either mathematically, from a staffing point of view, or from a rendering and computing point of view there was no way we were going to be able to get the movie done, so there was an undercurrent of panic. This movie was 10 times bigger than the previous biggest film we had just done,

*Men in Black*, which had 200 shots and this thing had 2,000 shots! It was an enormous jump up for us from a logistics point of view, so when we saw the script we spent months breaking it down into its component parts—what are the assets, what are the environments, what are the technical challenges, and how are we going to do certain scenes? John Knoll would break the scenes down and say "We're going to do these as miniatures, and these are going to be computer graphics." Dennis Muren, who was working on the Gungan battle, did the Naboo scenes out on the plains and Scott Squires did the city scenes. Each supervisor had his own concerns. I was running between the three units, because George and Rick wanted to ensure that the performances were consistent across all three groups.

**Did you get a sense of the work becoming easier as you found your way?**

It was an uphill battle for the entire show because we were breaking every software tool and hardware restriction we had at ILM. We were challenging the facility and the people in it to the absolute max and beyond. You watch people running marathons, and they cross the line and fall over—that's what it felt like to do *The Phantom Menace*. On *Attack of the Clones* I ran across the finish line and I still had air in my lungs, and on *Revenge of the Sith*

I didn't break a sweat! That's because we developed a greater understanding of what George wanted, and the technology was much more robust. That's the real strength of ILM. You are surrounded by true geniuses and everyone is pulling together; that's how we were able to do it.

**Are there things you did on *Revenge of the Sith* that you couldn't have achieved on *The Phantom Menace*?**

Oh yes, tons. For example, there was an early discussion on whether Yoda was going to be digital in *The Phantom Menace*. I was willing to take it on, but I was really concerned at the acting ability of my animators and whether the simulator could do the cloth rendering. I was very happy on each film with what we achieved at that moment in time. We were maxing out everything and there was nothing more we could've put in there in terms of fidelity or subtly in the facial performances.

**A lot of fans would like to see the digital Yoda in *The Phantom Menace*.**

George certainly goes back to his films and tinkers with them, so it's a possibility. Maybe one day!







to be harder than doing a full digital character. So one of the first assignments I had when I went over for those 10 days with George at Leavesden was to do a side-by-side presentation of Ahmed in the suit with the digital head tacked on, and a fully animated Jar Jar.

I very carefully tracked the amount of time that it took to match the head onto the body, and found that we were able to do even broader actions in the fully animated one. It was completely integrated, because it was all digital. George noticed that right away. We still kept Ahmed in the suit for lighting reference, but he was fully animated for all the shots.

#### Was there a lot to do on set for ILM?

There was actually a mini-crew on set. John Knoll was there every day, because on a *Star Wars* film every shot has some element of visual effects, whether it be

a background that's going to be composited in because we're shooting over bluescreen or there are digital characters. I went over for six weeks.

There's also what we call the match-move team that works with the first unit. They do measurements on every camera set up. We want to know where the camera was; we want to know what lens was being used; we want to know the distance between the characters and places on the set, because later at ILM—and it could be a year later—we may need to extend the set or alter it because of George's desire to make changes from when we first shot it.

The match-move team measures lights, and the position of the lights. We have a sphere that is matte gray on one side and silver on the other. If we shoot the gray side it shows you where the key light and the fill light are coming from, and if you swing the ball around, it reflects the entire set into the ball. You can unwrap



Jar Jar was certainly a ground-breaking achievement in cinema history. George always said that he was for the younger fans, and he nailed it. I was given the responsibility of bringing the character to life and when Jar Jar got panned, I took it hard. I flew back from the New York premiere with George and he asked how I was feeling. I said, "Everybody hates Jar Jar." He replied, "Not everybody hates Jar Jar; the kids love Jar Jar, and you'll see that. The other thing is that they're responding to him like he's a real character on screen. They're having a visceral reaction to him the same way that people responded to Chris Tucker's character in *The Fifth Element*. You should be happy that your work is being seen as an actor. You got over a high bar that no one's giving you any credit for right now, and [your achievement is] significant."

#### What challenges were involved in making the character work?

The initial thought was that it was going to be Ahmed Best's body with a digital head on top. Ahmed had a full suit from the neck down, and then he wore a Jar Jar head on top of his head, so the live actors had the correct eyeline. He performed everything for us, so the costume ended up being a fantastic lighting reference for John Knoll's team. Adding the head proved



the set out of the silver ball, and then triangulate where all the lights and cameras are. They got notebooks filled with measurements and positions, and they worked with continuity as well, so they knew which shots George favored.

#### How did the actors deal with all this?

Liam Neeson was very interested in how they were going to move, and what they were going to look like. He was very tuned in to what the imaginary was going to be.

Natalie Portman came up to me at the New York premiere and said, "I know I was there, but I had no idea that it was going to look like it looked!" She was swept along by the whole process.

They were very cooperative, but I think they thought it was a little crazy, too! Ewan McGregor just shook his head, because I'd go up with my laptop to show him what the scene was going to look like, and he'd say, "Yep, alright, just tell me where I'm looking, who's coming at me, and what do they look like?"

#### How did the battle droids' distinctive animation come about?

It came about by mistake. We had some motion, and we put it on a battle droid

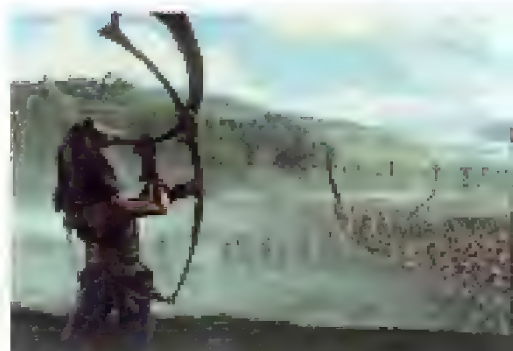
model, but it hadn't tracked properly and the butt ended up sticking out more than we would have liked. George saw it and liked it. It made them look more goofy. To George, the battle droids were very much a work in progress in terms of evolving from a battle droid to the super battle droids we see in the later movies. He told us, "Those things are just being cranked out; they're not very smart." Their heads are always moving around and they don't quite know what's going on.

#### Did Watto present a different challenge?

Well he did, just because of his design—he's got that huge belly! I remember some people at ILM saying because of his wing ratio he'd never fly. I happened to be watching one of the science and nature channels and there was a documentary on bumble bees and a scientist said, "Actually the wing to body ratio is quite confusing, because technically they shouldn't be able to fly." I went back in and said, "The bumble bee has wings that are too small, so Watto's got wings that are too small. And by the way, his belly's filled with helium!"

#### How did you come up with Sebulba's walking style?

That came from the lead animator for the character, Miguel Fuertes. He had seen a 1932 film called *Freaks*; in that movie there's a man with no legs, Johnny Eck, and he walks on his hands. He was the true inspiration for Sebulba's walk. Miguel and another animator, Patrick Bueno, pretty much handled everything for Sebulba.



I loved how he played with his whiskers, when they were standing beside the Podracer. The great thing about being an animation director is that you can present the scenes to the animators and they will improvise. It came out just like a real actor would take on the character: Where's the character in the story? Where is he going? Where has he been? What's his attitude? What does he think about this boy? He ended up being like [cartoon archvillain] Snidely Whiplash!

#### Is there anything in the movie that you really wanted to do that couldn't be done at the time?

We pretty well achieved everything that George asked us to do. There was one sentence in the script that took six months to deal with. And that sentence was something like:

The Gungan army marches out to battle

Prior to that, ILM didn't have a way to handle that many characters on the screen at the same time. When I went to the

premiere my wife had to get up and go to the bathroom and missed that scene. When she came back she asked, "Did I miss anything?" I said, "Yeah, six months of my life!" I remember







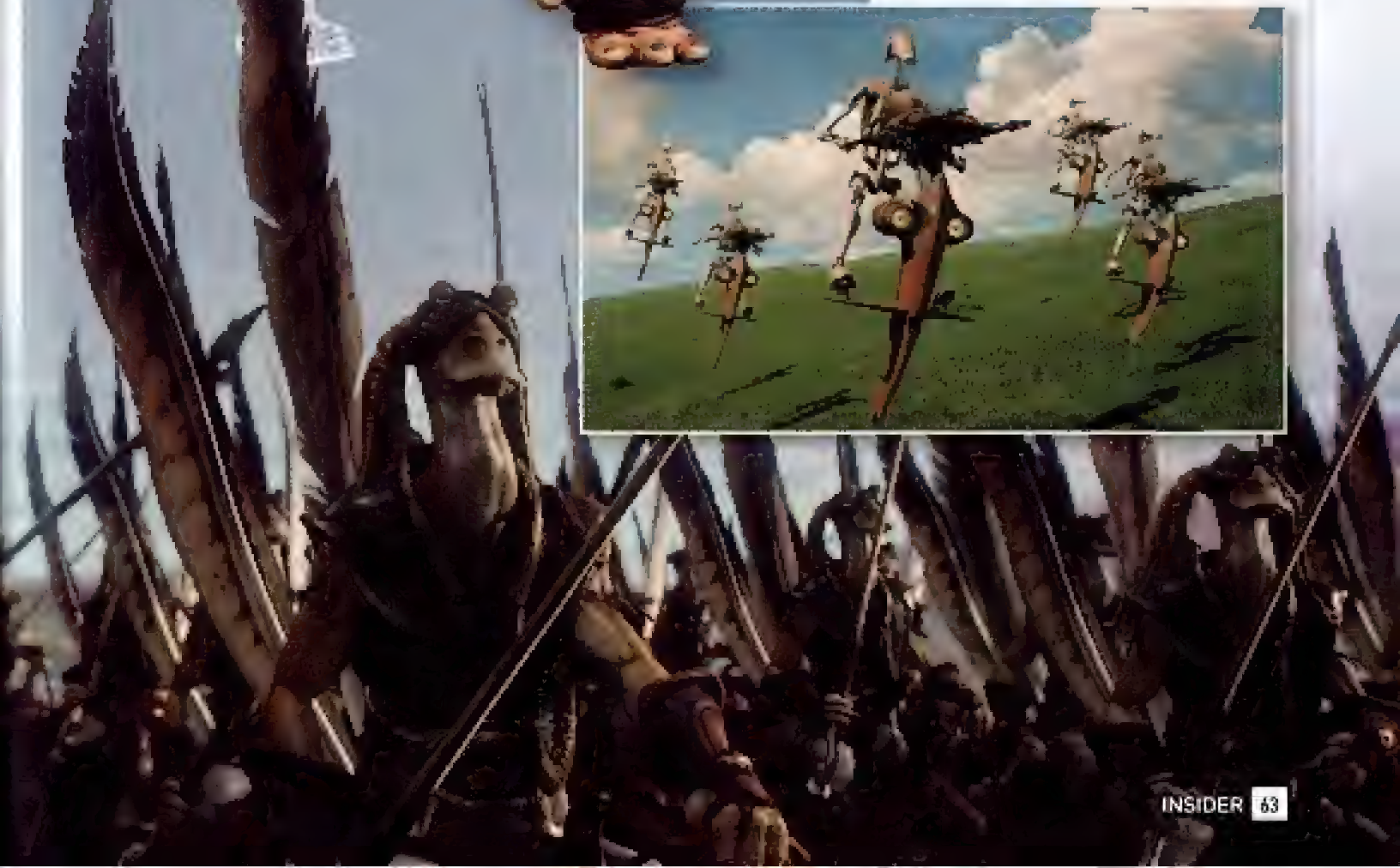
being really worried that we would never be able to deliver those huge, epic shots of the Gungans because the software team, although it was working as hard as it could, took a lot longer than originally projected. The months were going by and we were only just able to achieve that shot!

**How important is it to incorporate the actual actor into the character design?**

If you look at some of the great Disney films, the characters look like the voice actors. For example, Terry Thomas playing King John in *Robin Hood* or George Sanders doing the voice of Shere Khan in *The Jungle Book*, have a resemblance to the actors. As an animator if your character looks like the voice actor, you are able to grab facial expressions that are particular to that person. For example, Brian Blessed's large jowls when he shakes his face around as Boss Nass were added to our animation. I always had George film the actors, so we were able to actually look at Brian's mouth and his jowls. They are a significant part of his personality and his facial expressions. You can ask the animator to match it.

**What is your proudest achievement?**

To have led an incredible group of animators and to have produced high quality work that I am very proud of. 🐸





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# BLASTER



92 CLASSIC MOMENT

## MEET THE JEDI

Anakin comes face-to-face with the Jedi Council on Coruscant



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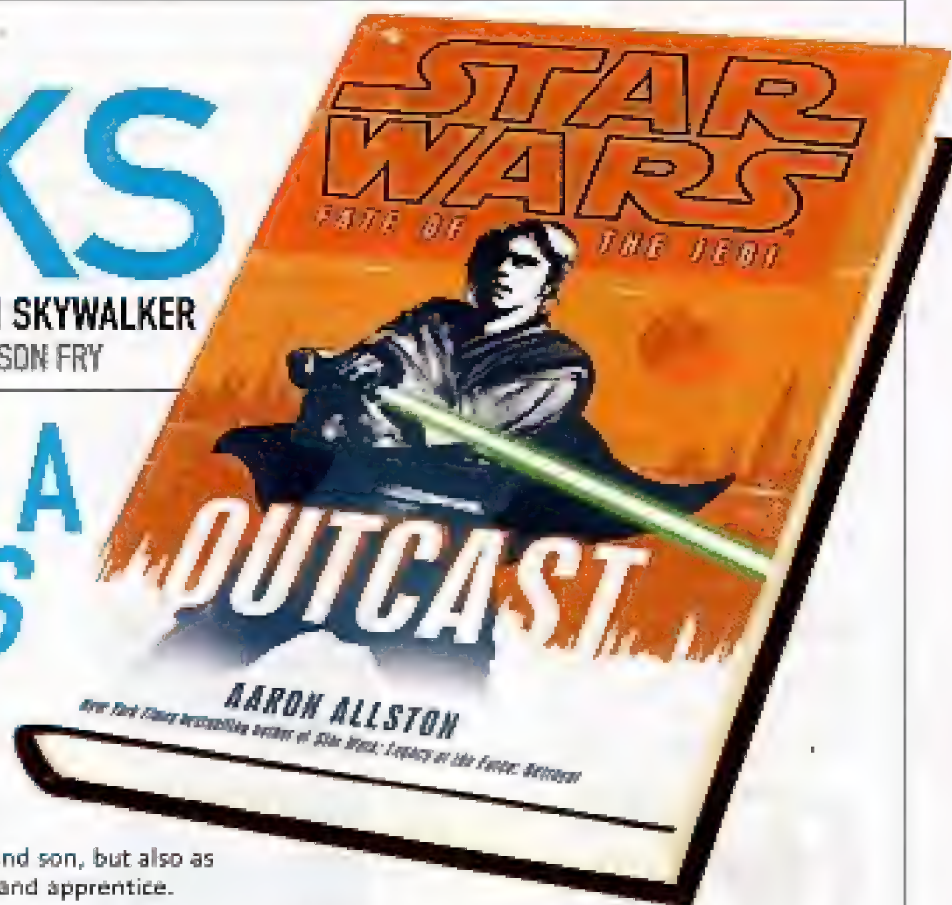
"THERE'S NOTHING LIKE A GOOD BLASTER AT YOUR SIDE, KID"



# BOOKS

AARON ALLSTON SENDS LUKE AND BEN SKYWALKER ON A VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY! WORDS: JASON FRY

## BEGINNING A STAR WARS "ODYSSEY"



**T**he conclusion of the nine-book *Legacy of the Force* series saw a *Star Wars* galaxy that had taken some unexpected turns:

Jacen Solo was consumed by the dark side, battled his family as Darth Caedus, and died at the hands of his sister Jaina. And a savage war ended with Admiral Daala—a high-ranking Imperial officer—as the leader of a battered, exhausted Galactic Alliance.

Peace has returned to the stars, but it's still an uneasy time—as we find out in Aaron Allston's *Fate of the Jedi: Outcast* (Del Rey, \$27). On Coruscant, young Jedi Valin Horn has gone mad and been taken into protective custody by the Jedi Order. Caedus' rampage has left many suspicious of the Jedi, and Daala wants greater control of the Order.

**"The whole thing about father and son trying to connect with one another, making room for one another in changing circumstances is something I'm very familiar with."**

Rather than risk confrontation, Luke Skywalker offers Daala a self-imposed exile. He and his son Ben leave Coruscant to investigate both what drove Valin mad and the secret of Force techniques that Jacen learned on his previous travels, hoping to find a connection.

Their journey will give Luke and Ben time to get reacquainted, not just as

father and son, but also as Master and apprentice.

Allston says his parents divorced when he was young, and as a teenager he would spend a couple of weeks with his father each summer. "The whole thing about father and son trying to connect with one another, making room for one another in changing circumstances—from year to year, my father might have a different job or be in a different city—is something I'm very familiar with," he says. "Of course, we tended to spend our time talking about writing or engaging in logic games rather than igniting lightsabers and confronting evil, but there are still some parallels."

The working title of the *Fate of the Jedi* series was *Star Wars Odyssey*, and readers will find echoes of *Odyssey*'s adventures—but only echoes, Allston makes plain.

"We're not just recycling *Odyssey*'s adventures," he says. "Though we did make some jokes about it at our story conference. 'So we have this cave, see, and there's a blinded rancor in it, and

he has a herd of banthas, and Luke and Ben have to escape strapped to the banthas' undersides....' Nothing like that."

Still, he adds, "I'm a lifelong Greek myth buff, so the opportunity to play with these elements in a *Star Wars* context was very appealing to me."

One example: Luke and Ben investigate a secret group of Force users on Dorin, the homeworld of the prequel-era Jedi Plo Koon. It's a quest that takes them beneath the planet's surface.

"Visiting the underworld is a recurrent theme in Greek myth—Orpheus, Theseus, and Odysseus all did it," Allston says. "I wanted to have Luke do something similar. And the ghosts of Greek myth are not scary things—they're sad, even pathetic. So the hidden Kel Dor order became a sort of analog of the underworld of Greek myth." (There's a big difference between the two underworlds, though, one you'll have to read *Outcast* to uncover.)

On Kessel, meanwhile, another underworld beckons—one in which Han Solo must confront old terrors, and the aging pilots of Rogue and Wraith Squadrons combat a threat to Lando Calrissian's spice-mining world. (Allston says writing Han's story was

**BOOKS** continued next page



## BOOKS continued

his favorite part of the book, though he adds that, "I'm also very fond of a rather lunatic conversation between Jaina and Kenth Hamner.")

Allston made his *Star Wars* debut telling tales of the Rogues and Wraiths (in 1998's *X-Wing: Wraith Squadron*),

**"This opportunity came up to bring in a cast of characters largely drawn from the Rogue comics and novels and the Wraith trilogy, so I jumped on it."**

but he says the original outline for *Outcast* barely featured those fast-talking, faster-flying pilots. Nor was there a role for Wedge Antilles, until "this opportunity came up to bring in a cast of characters largely drawn

from the Rogue comics and novels and the Wraith trilogy, so I jumped on it."

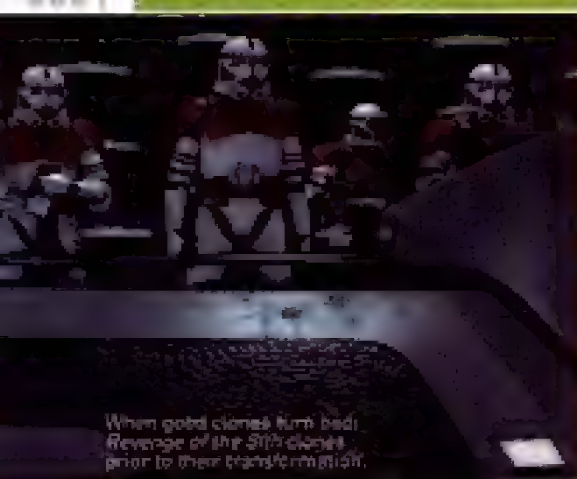
And he enjoyed the experience doing so, he says, "Chiefly because it allowed me to present these veteran characters in a new situation, and to give the readers a glimpse of characters that haven't been

seen in many years. It was just lucky that I found a logical and reasonable way to have this happen. I really don't want to drop these characters into a story just because I like them." ☺



**ASK  
LOBOT**

AS RELATED TO LELAND Y. CHEE



When gold clones turn bad: *Revenge of the Sith* clones prior to their transformation.

What was the reasoning behind the clone troopers being renamed stormtroopers? When did this name change occur?

Anonymous, via e-mail.

Clone troopers took on the moniker of stormtroopers almost immediately after Palpatine declared himself Emperor. In the video game *Star Wars Battlefront II*, this transition is shown visually as the narrator describes the creation of the Empire. Behind the scenes, the use of the term stormtrooper was used in production notes for Episode III. The red Imperial shock troopers seen with Palpatine were identified as stormtroopers.

## PASSING THE BATON

The next book in the *Fate of the Jedi* series, *Omen*, will be penned by *Star Wars* newcomer Christie Golden—look for it in June—with veteran author Troy Denning next up before the baton is passed back to Aaron Allston.

Asked what it's like to go first, as he also did with the *Legacy of the Force* series, Allston compares it to "being the first runner on a relay team. You have to get things started fast and correctly; you have to set the pace for the team. And as with a relay race, handoffs are of crucial importance. Each of us is not only developing the main plot and numerous subplots, but we also have to prepare them to be handed off to the next author in turn—which means conveying accurately what we're trying to do with them, where we're not going to get our feelings hurt if the next author or two annihilates characters or sends the subplot off in unanticipated directions, and so forth."

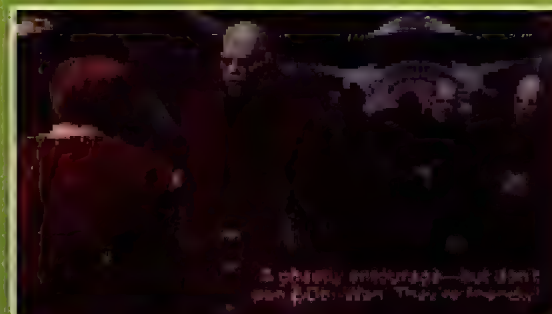
*Fate of the Jedi* kicked off last spring with a story conference in California, where the three authors sat down with

**"You have to get things started fast and correctly, you have to set the pace for the team."**

Del Rey's Shelly Shapiro, and Lucasfilm's Sue Rostoni, Leland Chee, and Pablo Hidalgo. There, Allston says, the story arc's basic details were hammered out, as the writers outlined their first books.



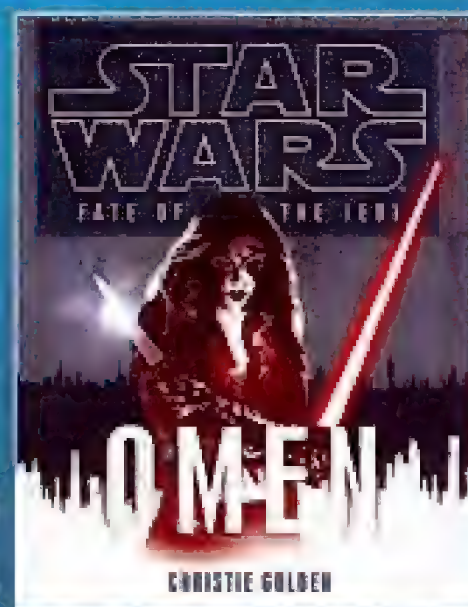
**ASK  
LOBOT**



In Episode III, who are the three tall hooded individuals that are apart of the welcoming committee when Obi-Wan Kenobi arrives at Pau City on Utapau, and what is their function within Utapau society: are they some kind of religious priest order?

Anonymous, via e-mail.

There are actually four hooded Utapauns seen behind Tion Medon's aides Zyn Jaweb and Lampay Fay. Though the individual Utapauns are unnamed, production notes identify them as "ground crew."



Asked how closely the series will wind up sticking to that general outline, Allston thinks back to *Legacy of the Force*. "With something as complicated as a nine-book, three-author, multiple cooperation, constantly reevaluated series, you're

doing pretty well if the final result resembles the original outline as much as 50 percent," he says. "With *Legacy of the Force*, we hit

more like 60 percent, so we were pretty pleased. Maybe we can do even better with *Fate of the Jedi*—the extra experience we've had has to count for something. Or so I hope." ☺

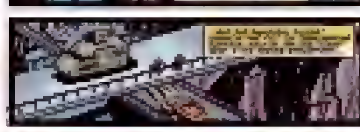
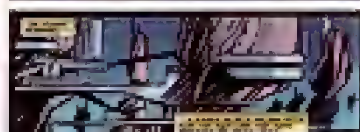
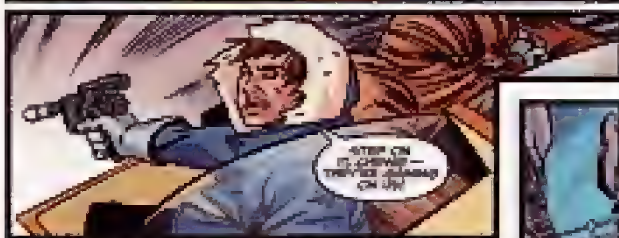
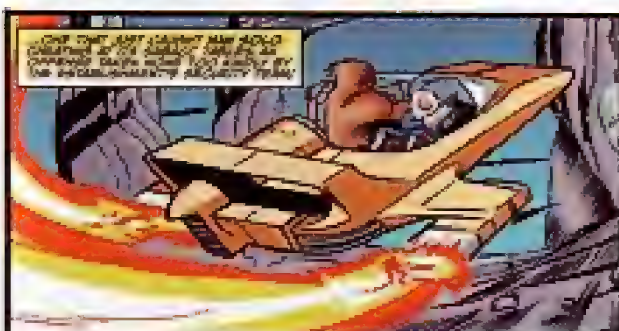


# COMICS

HAN AND CHEWIE HELP KICK OFF AN ALL-NEW SERIES!

WORDS: DANIEL WALLACE

## CLASSIC FUN!



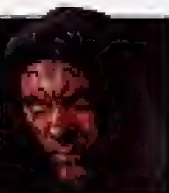
**C**lone Wars Adventures, a digest-sized anthology starring clones, Jedi, and battle droids, brought new readers to the world of Star Wars comics during its 2004-2007 run. This spring, Dark Horse aims to repeat that success with *Star Wars Adventures*, which revives the format through tales of Rebels, stormtroopers, and smugglers.

The first volume in the *Star Wars Adventures* series, "Han Solo and the Hollow Moon of Khorya," is written by former *Clone Wars Adventures* editor Jeremy Barlow. "Clone Wars Adventures was extremely popular, even earning an

Eisner award nomination," he says. "I got letters all the time asking when we'd do stories in that same style, but starring Luke, Han, and the rest."

If you think the title sounds like it was inspired by pulp serials, you're right; Barlow says it's an intentional nod to the serials that influenced the original movie trilogy.

**PAGE 73**  
**SHOPPING MAUL!**  
**COLLECTING**



"Hollow Moon," set before *A New Hope*, opens with a feuding Han and Chewbacca wondering if their partnership is worth it. "They're at a point in their smuggling careers when they're taking jobs they don't want, while trying not to compromise whatever moral code they might live by," says Barlow.

After Chewie is held as collateral by a well-connected gangster, Han is blackmailed into teaming up with a shady figure from his past on a suicide mission deep into the Empire's heart. "The story is about how difficult it is for Han and Chewie to remain honorable when the underworld they inhabit, and the people who surround them, are so crooked."

Art on "Hollow Moon" is handled by Rick Lacy, who acknowledges that he couldn't wait to tackle the *Millennium Falcon*. "There's a few scenes in the cockpit where the characters are arguing, which was a great chance to really investigate the closeness of the room and make it work," he says. "As an Expanded Universe artist, I think it's our job to make things mesh with the awesome designs seen in the movies. I did a lot of research into the planets, buildings, and droids of the saga. I prefer the grit of the original trilogy [over the prequels], and that's what I tried to portray."

Fortunately for Lacy, Han and Chewie are his favorite *Star Wars* characters. "I like to think I've got a pretty good understanding of their roguish personalities," he says. "Their bravado, their demeanor, the way they slay away from heroics even though they're good guys at heart. They're every bit the anti-heroes, but always find themselves working toward a better end for everyone."

I tend to ask myself in complicated situations—or when dealing with women—"What would Han do?"

Still in the works is *Star Wars Adventures* "Princess Leia and the Royal Ransom," also written by Barlow. "Star Wars lends itself to an 'all ages' audience," says Barlow, "which should mean that the material doesn't talk down to anyone, and that an adult

**COMICS** MORE NEXT PAGE





can enjoy the work just as much as kids. I fell in love with *A New Hope* at five years old, and I love it just as much at 35, so every *Star Wars* story I write starts with trying to capture the fun style and tone of the original trilogy."

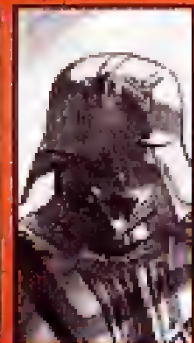
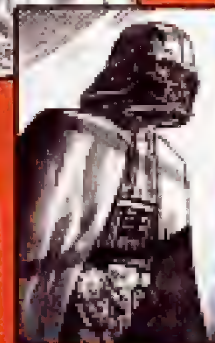
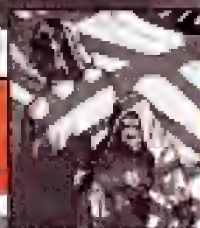
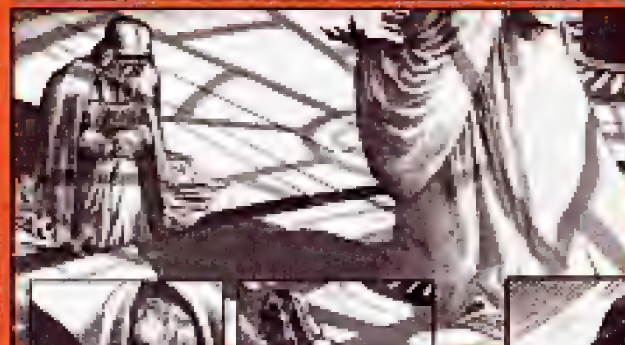
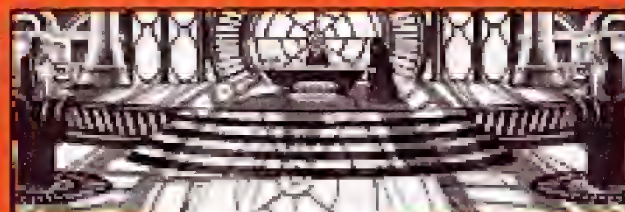
Of course, many younger fans started with the prequels before moving onto the classics. "It's only a matter of time before watching the original trilogy first will seem quaint and antiquated, and I'm just fine with that," says Barlow. "It means that *Star Wars* will live on through the next generation and beyond." ☺

## A JEDI ALONE

UGLY ENEMIES AND IMPOSSIBLE ODDS ABOUND IN *DARK TIMES*' "BLUE HARVEST"

**S**tar Wars. *Dark Times* returns on April 22, launching the five-part "Blue Harvest" story arc (following the story's sneak-peek debut on [MySpace.com/darkhorsepresents](http://MySpace.com/darkhorsepresents)). The Clone Wars are over and the Jedi Knights nearly extinct, but one survivor is learning the hard way that it's not so easy to earn an honest living.

Pitted against a hostile horde, Dass Jennir needs to keep himself alive while remaining hidden from the Emperor's sinister agents. *Dark Times* #13 is written by Mick Harrison with art from Doug Wheatley. ☺



## THE PREQUEL'S EQUAL!

BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN EPISODES I AND II WITH THE NEWEST *STAR WARS OMNIBUS*

**T**en years separate *The Phantom Menace* and *Attack of the Clones*—long enough for the Republic to tumble into a war that would ultimately destroy it. Although the champions of this era may not have seen the writing on the wall, their exploits were as brave as in any other period. *Emissaries and Assassins*, the newest release in the *Star Wars Omnibus* series, collects four tales (some of which have never been reprinted) weighs in at a hefty 464 pages and is set in the wake of Episode I.

### *Episode I Adventures*

This grouping of four stories appeared shortly after *The Phantom Menace*'s 1999 release, filling in gaps in the movie's narrative. Obi-Wan Kenobi, Qui-Gon Jinn, Anakin Skywalker, and Queen Amidala star!

### *Emissaries to Malastare*

The Jedi Council leaves the peace of its quiet Temple to join the action as Mace Windu, Ki-Adi-Mundi, and others stop a terrorist plot on Malastare. Did we mention that it happens in the middle of a Podrace?

### *Jango Fett: Open Seasons*

The origin of the galaxy's greatest bounty hunter is revealed in this tale that spans many decades.

### *Outlander*

Master tracker Aurra Sing gets her turn in the spotlight as she hunts a lost Jedi among Tatooine's Tusken Raiders. Fans of *Star Wars Legacy* should note that this tale features the debut of one of *Legacy*'s major characters. ☺



# COLLECTING

AN INSTANT HIT WITH AUDIENCES AND FANS ALIKE, DARTH MAUL BECAME THE ESSENTIAL CHARACTER TO OWN FROM *THE PHANTOM MENACE*. WORDS & PICTURES: GUS LOPEZ

## COLLECT D'MAUL!

### MAUL AROUND THE WORLD!

Darth Maul was plastered on food product and premiums all throughout the world and even got his own cereal in several European countries as part of a massive promotion by Kellogg's. In places like Greece, Spain, France, Portugal, and Belgium, he got his own cover shots on boxes of Chocos and Smacks. One of 10 possible premiums in most of these boxes consisted of a small Darth Maul plastic statue with a secret scroll hidden inside.



### MAD MAUL!

You would never laugh in his face, but there were parody versions of Darth Maul. The Idea Factory produced a line of plush toys called the *Phantom Meanies*. "Bark Mole" was one of the plush toys in the series, consisting of a stuffed mole wielding a double-ended shovel. This tattooed villain even wore Darth Maul's outfit from head to paw. Who said marsupials can't be Sith?

COLLECTING continues overleaf



## COLLECTING *continues*

### MAUL TO THE MAX!

Perhaps the ultimate Darth Maul collectible is the life-sized statue created by Pepsi for promotions in the US and Canada. Pepsi produced hundreds of these statues of Maul in a classic pose wielding his double-ended lightsaber and used an interesting production technique to create low priced, high quality statues. On the outside, he has an elaborate costume and paint detailing on the face, yet the inside of the statue had large styrofoam limbs to fill out the body. The construction allows this item to be easily transported by one person because it's so light. The author in fact had an interesting time transporting this plastic-wrapped piece through U.S. Customs when driving home from Canada. "No, we are not serial murderers with a body in the back, just *Star Wars* fans!" This piece always upstages anything on display in the room, and is one of the most screen-accurate life-size *Star Wars* statues ever produced!



### A SPEEDING SITH!

Hasbro would go on to make a range of Darth Maul action figures in different scales and poses. One of the most popular was the large size Darth Maul figure riding his Sith speeder. In the U.S., this 12-inch figure was only available in Wal-Mart stores and became one of the most difficult to find figures from the line as few 12-inch action figures came with their own vehicle.



### SABER OF A SITH

In 2002, Master Replicas began issuing its line of high quality prop replicas based on the *Star Wars* films. The popular Darth Maul lightsaber came in a number of varieties including a full-sized double-ended replica, a battle-damaged version, and a signature edition signed by Ray Park, who portrayed Darth Maul on screen. For Master Replica's Force FX series, the company issued a sleek replica lightsaber with an illuminating blade and sound effects. Unlike other sabers in the FX series,

this piece almost exactly matched the limited edition prop replica, which sold for substantially more. Two Force FX Maul sabers could be combined with a connecting rod to create a massive double-ended saber with ignited blades and authentic sound effects. This monster saber alone was probably responsible for more broken living room light fixtures across the country than all the other Force FX sabers combined. There really is a dark side!



## SITH ON TOP!

When Darth Maul appeared in *The Phantom Menace*, *Star Wars* fans got their first glimpse of a new breed of Sith, a tattooed bad boy who proved to be more than a match for his Jedi foes. With the release of the movie, there was an inevitable surge of Darth Maul related products, but besides all the standard issue collectibles there are some truly exceptional Maul pieces. Take the Tricon cup toppers offered in the massive KFC, Taco Bell, and Pizza Hut promotion for Episode I. Most of the toppers in the set merely consisted of character busts attached to cups, but the Darth Maul topper available at Taco Bell had the added bonus of depicting the top half of the evil Sith Lord as he appeared just after his lightsaber battle with Obi-Wan!

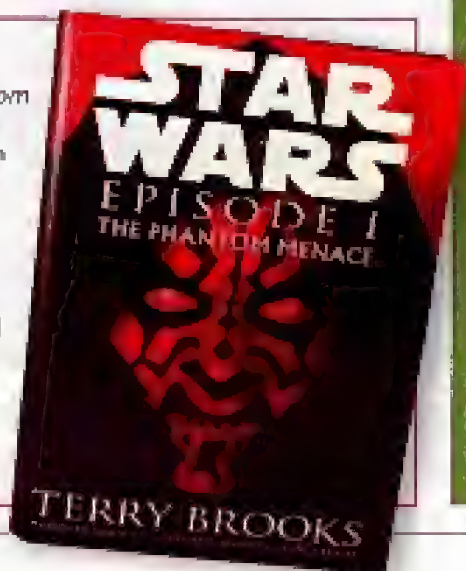


## MAUL GETS MUGGED!

Hasbro's Mighty Muggs series takes characters from the *Star Wars* films and portrays them as cute, chubby anime style figures. Darth Maul was represented as one such character with a mini double-ended lightsaber. In fact, Maul's double saber is so stubby that even Mighty Muggs' Yoda lightsaber outreaches it!

## COVER VERSION

The novelization of *The Phantom Menace* by Terry Brooks came in four varieties, each one with a different character photo on the cover. Each of the cover designs were based on standard images that Lucas Licensing used on a wide range of product for the global promotion of the movie. For many fans, the Darth Maul cover was the clear favorite with that variant frequently in short supply at bookstores.



In the opening crawl of *Revenge of the Sith*, the text tells us there "are heroes on both sides". Who are the heroes on the Separatist side?

**Duff Jackson, Florida**

As in the real world, what makes one a hero or a villain depends on one's certain point of view. So if you are on the side of the Confederacy, Separatist leaders like Count Dooku and General Grievous are heroes to you while it is Anakin and Obi-Wan who are the villains. Even Harkonnen general Whorm Loathsome from the *Star Wars*. The Clone Wars movie had a reputation that could be construed as being a hero. The Separatists also have truly noble leaders like Mon Calamari Commander Merai from *Star Wars Republic #50*: The Defense of Kamino, who believed that secession from the corrupt Republic was a just cause. Had the Confederacy been the victors of the Clone Wars, galactic history may have been kinder towards the Separatist leaders.



# TOYS

LUCAS LICENSING'S CHRIS SPITALE PREVIEWS THE LATEST *STAR WARS* GEAR YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS!

## KOTOBUKIYA

Kotobukiya introduce its new ARTFX+ Statue Series of finely detailed vinyl model kits. With a height of seven inches, and with a suggested retail price of only \$59.99, this Japanese import brings your favorite *Clone Wars* characters to life in three exciting series. Series I: Jedi is available in May and includes Jedi Anakin Skywalker, Ahsoka Tano, and Obi-Wan Kenobi. Each figure includes bonus parts that when assembled makes an exclusive ARTFX+ statue—Jedi Master Yoda! All figures come with interlocking, metal-plated bases that connect in various formations with the magnetized figures so that you can customize your own display. Ahsoka even includes Jabba the Hutt's son Rotta in a removable backpack that can also be worn by Anakin! Sure to be an instant hit, this debut series will be followed by Series II: Clone Troopers and Series III: The Sith.



**MUST  
HAVE!**

TOYS continues next page



# HASBRO

Hasbro continues its successful Build a Droid series with a *Legacy Collection* wave devoted entirely to *The Empire Strikes Back*. Included in this assortment are never-before-made Luke Skywalker (with bionic arm) and Princess Leia from the film's final scene aboard the Rebel medical frigate. Also included are two versions of Hoth Rebel Troopers (with mounted blaster) and two different versions of Cloud City's Ugnaughts (with carbon freezing control panel). Captain Needa and Emperor Palpatine round out this must-have collection. Collect all six figures to build U-3PO, the silver protocol droid first seen aboard the *Tantive IV* during the opening scenes of *A New Hope*.

The next Build a Droid wave is focused entirely around *Attack of the Clones* and includes many never-before-released figures, including the long-awaited Owen and Beru Lars (complete with pitcher of blue milk!), the eye-patched Captain Typho, Jedi Knight Tarados Gon, Obi-Wan Kenobi, and a black-clad Concept Art Series Anakin Skywalker. Collect all six figures to build the Hunter-Killer combat droid HK-47, popularized in LucasArts' *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic*.

Princess Leia

Luke Skywalker

Emperor Palpatine

Hoth Troopers

Captain Needa

Ugnaughts

Tarados Gon

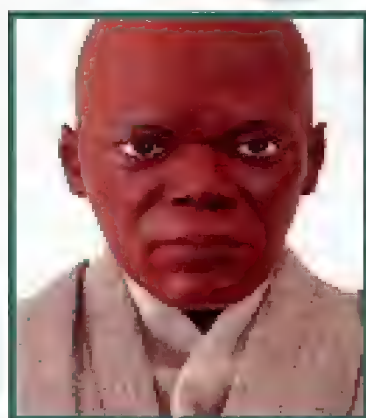
Anakin Skywalker

Beru and Owen Lars

Captain Typho

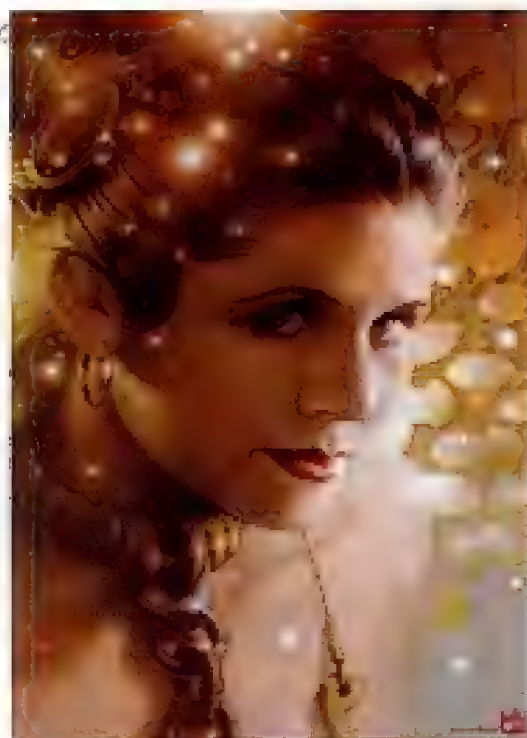
Obi-Wan Kenobi





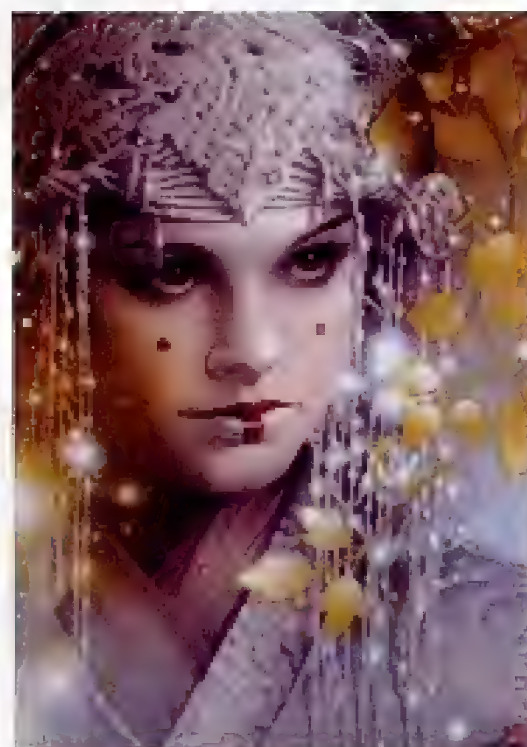
## DIAMOND SELECT

Diamond Select Toys continues its new Ultimate Quarter Scale line of *Star Wars* action figures with two *Revenge of the Sith* additions—the noble Jedi Knight Mace Windu, available nationwide this May, and dark side-bound Anakin Skywalker, shipping in June. Each possesses an impressive 23 points of articulation in addition to several electronic sound clips, recreating key movie moments. Each figure is complete with high-quality, individually layered Jedi robes and includes display stands, lightsabers, additional hands and other key accessories. Both figures join the previously released Darth Maul, Episode IV Obi-Wan Kenobi and Han Solo in Hoth Gear, and retail for \$79.99.



## ACME

This spring Acme Archives releases two new exquisite art prints by famed Japanese artist Tsuneo Sanda. Printed on elegant velvet paper, each beautifully realized print measures 18 x 24 inches and is signed by the artist. Limited to only 150 pieces and with a retail price of \$185, *Lovely Leia* is available as a general release, and *Elegant Amidala* is an exclusive to [StarWarsShop.com](http://StarWarsShop.com). Both ladies of *Star Wars* are certain to be an immediate hit!



TOYS continues next page





### BASIC FUN

Basic Fun introduces Series Three of its collectible key chain line with characters from both the *Star Wars* film saga as well as the new *Clone Wars* television series.

Choose from Han Solo, Biker Scout, and the Death Star from the classic saga, Count Dooku, MagnaGuard, and Plo Koon from the hit animated series, and build your own stackable army with Commander Cody, Captain Rex, and Commander Fox Stack-Ems. Each retails for only \$5.99 and is available June 1. ☺



# TOYS EXTRA!

THIS YEAR NOT ONLY MARKS THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF *THE PHANTOM MENACE*, BUT ALSO 10 YEARS OF LICENSED *STAR WARS* SETS FROM LEGO! JEREMY BECKETT CELEBRATES PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER.

## LEGENDS IN LEGO!

SPECIAL  
PREVIEW!

It was in April 1998 when news broke that Lucasfilm and the LEGO Group were joining forces to produce and sell construction toys based on the three new *Star Wars* movies, as well as the original *Star Wars* trilogy. It was a long wait until the end of February 1999 when the first four products were released, but a week later a fifth set was issued, and soon after, *Star Wars* fans were treated to the entire *The Phantom Menace* collection in one fell swoop.

Since then the LEGO Group has always delivered high quality—and highly playable—construction toys. Sticking firmly to its motto that “det bedste er ikke for godt” (Danish for “only the best is good enough”) the licensed *Star Wars* sets have proven to be the LEGO Group’s most successful line in the company’s impressive 77-year history.

To mark the first decade of LEGO *Star Wars*, a special 10th Anniversary line has been released in packaging that, while evocative of the original look, maintains a unique and modern style, giving the 10th Anniversary collection its own identity. As its focus, the LEGO *Star Wars* team “chose the most classic and iconic models, and tried to avoid repetition of the 1999 assortment,” a company spokesman says.

The team, represented by Jens Kronvold, Anna Pradzynska, and Sten Sørensen, is extremely dedicated to its role of bringing fun and creative LEGO *Star Wars* sets to builders. They are all fans of the saga and keen viewers of *The Clone Wars* animated series. Asked what their favorite LEGO sets are, Jens declares his love for the *Millennium Falcon* (which he personally designed). Anna and Sten prefer the

Hailfire droid and Slave I, respectively.

The team is always monitoring feedback from consumers of all ages to get a feeling for how well the sets are doing and what directions fans would like to see the line go. “We are very happy with the continuous strong results and longevity of the line, and that so many children find the products attractive and stay loyal to us,” Jens says. In fact, Jens, Anna, Sten, and the rest of the team are so in tune with those who build and collect their sets that they go to great lengths to keep some features secret until the sets have been fully constructed. Expect a few surprises as you build, play with, and explore the LEGO *Star Wars* 10th Anniversary line!

### DARTH VADER'S TIE FIGHTER

Darth Vader's iconic TIE fighter is straight out of the final battle of *A New Hope*. New and improved from the original 1999 model, the TIE fighter includes a new mold, silver coloring, a flick-firing action, and includes a Darth Vader mini-figure. This 251 piece set is out now, priced at \$29.99



LEGO TOYS continues next page



## ECHO BASE

Relive the classic scene from *The Empire Strikes Back*, when Han Solo sets out from Echo Base in order to rescue his friend, Luke Skywalker, who is lost on the frozen plains of Hoth. This set features an opening turret hatch, flick-firing action and—never before seen in LEGO form—a tauntaun! Mini-figures included in this set are Han Solo, two Rebel troopers and two snowtroopers. Available from August, this 155 piece set will sell for \$24.99.



## BATTLE OF ENDOR

Lead the Rebels and their Ewok allies in an assault on the heavily guarded Imperial bunker (with working door, exploding hatches and interior control room) featured in *Return of the Jedi*. Armed with the Ewok catapult and glider, the specially selected Rebel commando force will face the Imperial AT-ST, complete with moving legs, and two speeder bikes. This huge playset will come with 12 mini-figures: Han Solo and Princess Leia in camouflage fatigues, Chewbacca, two all-new Rebel troopers with combat helmets, R2-D2, two Imperial scout troopers, an Imperial guard and three newly designed Ewoks, including Chief Chirpa and Wicket. With 890 pieces to build, this set will cost \$99.99 and will be available in August.



## FAN CHOICE!

In May, 2008, fans were asked to choose a new set through a poll on Toys "R" Us web sites in the U.S. and Germany. They were able to select from: Arrest of Palpatine (Episode III), Mon Calamari Cruiser (Episode VI), and *Slave I* and Cloud City Landing Platform (Episode V).

The winning set was announced at the New York International Toy Fair in February. The forces of Admiral Ackbar swept to victory.

## HOME ONE MON CALAMARI STAR CRUISER

The flagship of the Rebel Alliance fleet and personal command ship of Admiral Ackbar, *Home One* leads the Rebel attack on the second Death Star in the climactic scenes of *Return of the Jedi*. Voted tops by LEGO fans, this set features a command center to act out the Rebel briefing, as well as a flight deck/repair hanger with a Rebel A-wing fighter and pilot mini-figure. An additional five mini-figures will come with the set: an all-new Admiral Ackbar, Mon Calamari officer, Mon Mothma, Lando Calrissian, and General Madine. The set is priced at \$109.99 and will be available from August.

The fifth and final set is still clouded in mystery. LEGO Ambassadors were contacted in January 2008 with a request for fan input into a second fans' choice. The LEGO company plans to reveal the identity of this new set—which undoubtedly will be as exciting and iconic as the rest of the line—in August, 2009 prior to its retail release in September.

And what about the future? The LEGO Star Wars team wasn't giving away any clues but did concede they were aware that 2010 is the 30th anniversary of *The Empire Strikes Back*. So who knows? Maybe there's another tauntaun coming our way! 🐾

**MUST HAVE!**



## 10 LEGO STAR WARS BLOCKBUSTERS!

- 1) X-wing Fighter (1999)
- 2) Imperial Star Destroyer (2006)
- 3) Naboo Fighter (1999)
- 4) Mos Espa Podracer (1999)
- 5) TIE Fighter & Y-wing (1999)
- 6) ARC-170 Starfighter (2005)
- 7) Snowspeeder (1999)
- 8) Anakin's Podracer (1999)
- 9) Trade Federation MTT (2007)
- 10) Clone Turbo Tank (2005)



# BOUNTY HUNTERS

MEET THE STARS, SHOW THE EVIDENCE, WIN THE BOUNTY! *INSIDER'S* BOUNTY HUNTER SECTION IS SPONSORED BY KOTOBUKIYA. EACH WINNER WILL RECEIVE THE FANTASTIC KOTOBUKIYA STAR WARS STATUE, AS SEEN ON THE LEFT!



CRAFTSMANSHIP  
**KOTOBUKIYA**

BOUNTY  
WINNER!



ENTERTAINMENT

## CHANGE MEETING!

### CAN YOU GO ONE BETTER?

HAVE YOU PARTIED WITH RAY PARK? MAYBE YOU WERE CHUMS WITH PETER CUSHING? OR PERHAPS YOU'RE FRIENDLY WITH DAVE FILONI? SEND YOUR PHOTOS OF YOUR ENCOUNTERS WITH THE STARS TO: BOUNTY HUNTERS, *STAR WARS INSIDER* VIA THE CONTACT DETAILS ON PAGE 8 OR, EMAIL: [STARWARSINSIDER@TITANEMAIL.COM](mailto:STARWARSINSIDER@TITANEMAIL.COM)

In May 2002, I travelled from Belgium to San Francisco to attend the premiere of Episode II with my wife Sofie and my best friend, Rob.

I couldn't believe my luck when, as we were leaving the airport, I saw Hayden Christensen wearing a Lucasfilm cap at the check-in desk!

He was very kind to take a few minutes to talk with us. He told me he was impressed that we had come so far to see the premiere. I doubt he was half as impressed as we were with meeting the future Dark Lord of the Sith! Mark Dermul, by email

Congratulations Mark! You win the top prize this time!



**WE ALSO HEARD  
FROM THE  
FOLLOWING  
BOUNTY HUNTERS...**



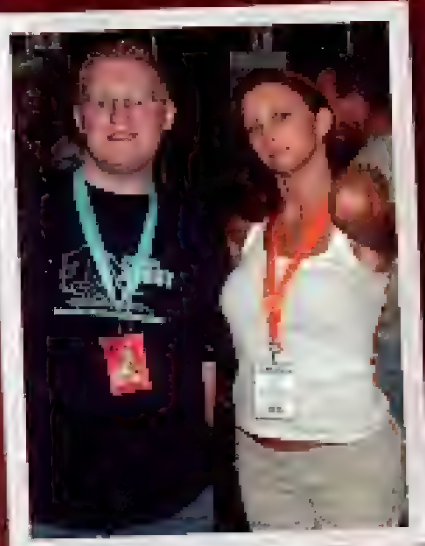
## WOOKIEE WONDER!

I went to Dragon\*Con in Atlanta for the third time in a row last year and I met Peter Mayhew. He is a very tall and kind man. I look forward to going to future Dragon\*Cons and meeting additional stars. It's always a blast!  
Preston MacManus, Georgia, U.S.A.



## FEELING BLUE

I am sending you a photo of me with Doug Wangler. Doug was Jan Deursema's model for the comic book character Quintan Vos. I finally got to meet him at Celebration IV. It was pure luck (or perhaps the Force was with me?) that we met on the only day that I wore my Aayla Secura costume! He was kind enough to pose for a "Master and Apprentice" photograph with me. I'm not sure how my husband took such a wonderful picture as he was wearing his clone trooper armor and helmet at the time!  
Pamela Simpson, California, U.S.A.



## MEETING MARA

I was lucky enough to meet the model who plays the role of Mara Jade in the Expanded Universe, Shannon McRandle, at Celebration Europe.  
Gary Pickup, Manchester, U.K.



## RAY OF LIGHT

I met the actor who plays the fearsome Sith Lord Darth Maul, Ray Park, at the Calgary Comic and Entertainment Expo last April. I'm the one with the white cowboy hat. This picture shows him with the 501st Badlands Garrison and the Calgary Fan Force. What a great day!  
Scot Campbell, BH-7113 GPR  
Badlands Garrison, Canada



## LUKE WHO IT IS!

The photo was taken on the Saturday afternoon of Celebration Europe as my lovely wife Suzanne and I fulfilled a lifetime ambition to meet the one and only Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill). Despite queuing for two and a half hours, meeting Mr. Hamill was the highlight of a marvelous weekend and gave us both a memory we'll cherish forever.  
Steve Nixon, by email



**OL  
410**

# BANTHA TRACKS



**BY THE FANS.  
FOR THE FANS.**

## 1999: MEETING THE FRIENDS OF OUR LIVES!

**T**his summer marks the 10th anniversary of the release of *Star Wars: Episode I The Phantom Menace*.

For many of us, however, it is also the anniversary of our entry into the worldwide community of *Star Wars* fans, either for the first time, or in a different way than before.

New friends who met while standing in line in 1999 kept in touch and formed city and area clubs. *Star Wars* costuming jumped to a high level of participation and accuracy. Charity and community work in the name of the saga grew. The Internet kept fans connected long after the movie left theaters, and helped individuals, even in remote corners of the

globe, stay close to their fellow fans and new friends.

For many, the summer of 1999 meant meeting new people who would become friends for life.

For two fans, however, the connections that began with the prequels resulted in an extraordinary, life-saving gift, given by one fan to another.



**ABOVE:** Josh Weisberg, in the San Diego Chargers jersey, and Barry Benecke, in the Chicago Bears jersey, pose with Weisberg's nurse Michelle, and Benecke's wife, Tuten.

**RIGHT:** Josh Weisberg (center) with his baby cousin Channah and cousin Gloria Zeilung, and Barry Benecke (right), at SeaWorld, San Diego. This photo was taken on one of Benecke's first trips to San Diego, before they knew if he would be a match.

### BANTHA TRACKS SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Any original art, envelope art, comics, illustrations, novel, stories, meeting information, or any material voluntarily submitted becomes the property of Bantha Tracks. No compensation will be given for voluntary submissions, and there is no guarantee of publication. Submissions will not be returned. Each submission must include the creator's name, age, contact

information, date the work was created, and a statement that the work is original, created by the person submitting it, and that the person is a member of the official *Star Wars* Fan Club. Send electronic files to [banthatracks@earthlink.net](mailto:banthatracks@earthlink.net), or send your mail to Bantha Tracks, c/o Mary Franklin, P.O. Box 27001, San Francisco, CA 94121.



**GET IN TRACKS!**





# A MIGHTY GIFT

**B**arry Benecke II is an active member of the Star Wars fan community in the Midwest Garrison of the 501st Legion, taking an inspiring role leading his Legion-mates in charity efforts like the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life in Chicago. In February, Benecke saved the life of a fellow Star Wars fan, a fan who, until very recently, he had not met in person.

Benecke and Josh Weisberg met virtually about 10 years ago, on *SirStavesGuide.com*, an online forum for Star Wars collectors. They talked occasionally on the message boards, connecting through their love of Star Wars toys. The two knew each other only by their forum names and not their real names. Then three years ago, Weisberg, who lives in San Diego, was diagnosed with Polycystic Kidney Disease, a hereditary disease that soon put him on dialysis, and also on a list for a donated kidney.

"There are an estimated 90,000 people in the United States waiting for kidneys to become available from dead or dying donors, and on average it takes about five years before they are matched up for a transplant," says Weisberg. "About 10,000 of those who are waiting live in my home state of California."

"Josh posted on *SirStavesGuide* in March of 2006 that he was having problems with his kidneys," recalls Barry. "I knew that you could donate a kidney, but hadn't a clue what was involved."

"I lost my mom to cancer in May, 2005," Benecke continues. "Katie Johnson (daughter of 501st founder Albin Johnson), a good friend Mike Crawford, and my wife's Uncle Jim all had their lives cut short by different forms of cancer. It was because of losing those folks that I was compelled to try to help someone else. The first person who I found that I might be able to help was Josh."

Weisberg recalls that he had "exchanged messages with Barry mostly in connection with spontaneous humor threads that poked fun at ourselves for being such serious Hasbro Star

Wars collectors. We would discuss how fresh-out-of-the-package Star Wars figures had that 'new figure smell' about them, for example."

Benecke said that Weisberg initially declined his offer, noting that they were not well-acquainted. "Then, after his kidneys started declining further, he contacted me and said, 'If you are serious about your offer, now is the time to get tested.'"

Benecke started the flights to the West Coast for testing, to see if his kidney would be compatible with Weisberg. What followed was a lengthy period of waiting and testing. During this period, Barry married the love of his life, Robin, in June, 2006. Before and immediately after the wedding their lives revolved around the pending donation.

"Barry is a very caring person, and it is in his nature to do something like this," says Robin, who admits that she has been very worried about her new husband throughout the process.



"When everything finally came to operation day, it was the worst time I have ever had in my life," Robin recalls. "I love Barry very much and it was so hard to sit there in the operating room and not have any communication. I was so happy to see him when he was out, being brought up to his hospital room. I was so worried about him the next day when he wasn't doing too well."

"Barry's gift of a kidney," says Weisberg, "got me a transplant after only nine months on dialysis—the only treatment available that

would let me survive—and two years, three months on the wait list. It's nothing short of incredible. I was ready to give up on life because I couldn't see myself continuing with dialysis." In addition to the pain and nausea that accompanies dialysis for many, Weisberg suffered a burst aneurysm in his brain as a result of the high blood pressure caused by kidney failure.

Recovery has been slow and careful for both men, but from all tests and appearances, successful. Benecke has been given the OK to go back to work by his doctor after recovering at home for



**ABOVE:** Barry Benecke at one of the four "Relay for Life" events he has participated in. Each year, Benecke has raised over \$1,000 in the relay for cancer research.

a month. Weisberg is undergoing constant, but diminishing, monitoring and testing, and has already gained back some freedoms he will no longer take for granted, like eating a large variety of foods and not having to sit in a dialysis chair so many hours each week.

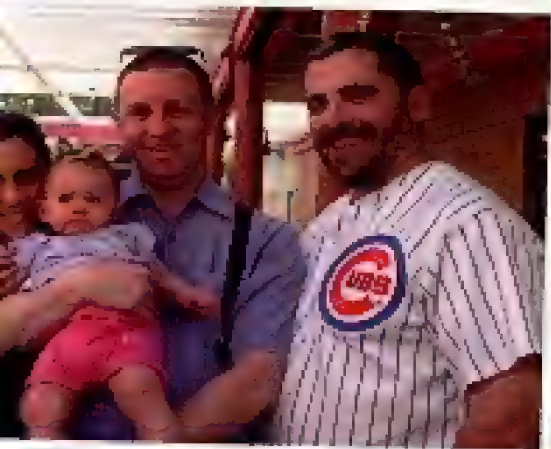
"Every day I'm grateful for Barry's gift," says Weisberg. "In his case, it's even more amazing that he'd be so generous as to rescue someone like myself who was almost a stranger, mostly known by a screen name online. We've become brothers since. But other folks can help to save family members and friends, or go as far as Barry did to help someone who's almost a stranger with a critical need."

"Barry has saved someone's life through his generosity," writes Kathy Van Beuningen, Commanding Officer of the Midwest Garrison. "I am totally in awe of his selfless spirit and willingness to make this sacrifice for another human being and Star Wars fan. The 501st Legion is indeed fortunate to be able to claim Barry as a member."

Weisberg adds that "if there is anything else that needs to be stressed it is how relatively safe and worthwhile it is for other people like Barry to step up and become living donors. With more generous people like him, it's very possible that there would no longer be 90,000 people in this country waiting for a kidney donation."

Star Wars fans have truly found the friends of their lives in the worldwide community, but for Weisberg and Benecke, the phrase "friends of our lives" means much more.

"The message boards have been a great addition to Star Wars fandom since the mid-1990s," Weisberg notes. "I remember when *Bantha Tracks* was my first source for keeping up to date with what was going on with other fans across the country. It's really crazy how this was something I just got into because it was fun and held my interest," he says. "Never in a million years would I have expected that it would save my life."







BANTHA TRACKS: BY THE FANS FOR THE FANS

# THE RED WAGON SPEEDER THAT COULD

**M**embers of the 501st and Rebel Legions from Florida and Georgia gathered together to join Squad 7, the Jacksonville 501st group, for a benefit in support of the Wollson's Children's Hospital. The event, the annual Red Wagon Parade, raised money through parade entries to purchase a special bed that acts as an incubator and radiant warmer for infants in neonatal intensive care at the hospital.

The Parade required that each group raise a \$1000 entry fee to benefit the hospital, and that they create a unique entry out of a red wagon. Squad 7 raised the entry fee, and then went on to create the wagon that claimed the "Show Stopper" Award.

"Our Star Wars-themed landspeeder wagon was months in the making," writes Matt "Redeye" Paisley of Squad 7. "Many thanks go to Andy Escobar for spearheading this project. Without Andy's time and expertise along with the assistance from a few local 501st this project would not have been completed. The construction and detail of the landspeeder wagon had everyone at the hospital and the parade in pure awe!"

The final "landspeeder" captured the "Show Stopper" award in the parade.



The start of something big. Or rather, very small.



# THE WAY WE WERE

**A**t the Lucasfilm companies, there are many who had a rich history in the Star Wars galaxy, long before coming to work for George. Joannee Honour, an Archive Registrar in the Lucasfilm Archives, got a head start thanks to her father, who took Honour and her sister to see Star Wars in the summer of 1977.

"By Halloween of that year, my Dad had a complete Darth Vader costume made for himself and paid \$800 for it!" recalls Honour. "He used to make appearances at banks and parties in San Diego and made a menacing 6'5" Darth Vader."

Honour, her sister, and her cousins were all fans. One of her prized possessions was a cassette recording and book of *The Empire Strikes Back*, given to her and her sister for Christmas.

At Lucasfilm, Honour takes care of the archived collections of movie props, costumes, and set pieces from the Star Wars and *Indiana Jones* movies. In addition to giving the pieces special care at the archive storage facilities, she often travels to Star Wars archive exhibit installations and de-installations around the world, making sure the treasured pieces are displayed and treated with care.

WOMEN: Joannee Honour (far right) in her cousin's bedroom in San Diego. "We all loved Star Wars," recalls Honour. "Darth Vader was my dad!"



GET IN TRACKS!





ABOVE: "We were honored to have Larry Freeman, the CEO of Watson's Children's Hospital, pulling our wagon," writes Paisley. "Out of the 38 wagon entries, Mr. Freeman could have pulled any wagon, but he chose to pull the wagon of the 501st Legion." Freeman's grandson rode in the speeder.



Honour's father, Joshua, adjusts the headpiece on a custom-made Vader costume, and often wore it to local events and parties. Here he is appearing at a local bank in San Diego.



A Lucasfilm Archivist, Honour, adjusts the headpiece on a custom-made Queen Amidala costume in preparation for the Star Wars Exhibition in Brazil.

# EDITORIAL

BY MARY FRANKLIN

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## YES, MESA ONE-A THOSE BOYOS

When *The Phantom Menace* came out in 1999, I was thrilled to witness the Jedi battling Darth Maul, to be a party to the scheming rise of Palpatine, and to enjoy Watto's unique humor.

I was less than thrilled with Jar Jar Binks. That's putting it in polite terms.

I guess if I had thought about it for more than a few seconds, I would have realized that the Gungan must have had fans somewhere. People somewhere — everywhere — were buying loads of Jar Jar merchandise. Ticket sales for the movie broke records, so clearly not everyone found him irritating.

But being much more self-centered than the average fan, that didn't occur to me. In fact, it didn't occur to me until last fall, when I was making some room in my small apartment by selling collectibles at a market in San Francisco.

One gentleman came by my little stall. "I'm looking for *Star Wars* collectibles of one particular character. My wife collects him, and only him." I dug through my boxes of action figures as he described the character. "Tall." Chewbacca? No. "Unusual voice." General Grievous? No. We went through maybe a dozen descriptions. Only because I had run out of ideas did I suggest Jar Jar. Could someone possibly want Jar Jar collectibles?

"Yes," he said. "That's the character. She only collects him."

I had no Jar Jar collectibles, which turned out to be too bad for me that day, as not one, but two other collectors came by looking only for collectibles depicting the clumsy Gungan.

I just couldn't get my head around it, so after the sale I contacted an area fan and acquaintance who is one of those Jar Jar collectors, to ask her "Why?"

Tami Ashford is an outstanding person with a responsible job, who gives a lot to her community, and who is an imaginative and involved member of the area *Star Wars* fan clubs. If I could get a reasonable answer from someone, it would be her.

Why Jar Jar, Tami?

"He's the comic relief in the movie. He is clumsy, you can barely understand him. Yet he tries really hard to help those he believes in. What is there not to like?"

Ashford says that she liked the character from the start. Not one to follow the crowd, she has centered her *Star Wars* collection around Jar Jar.

"My favorite piece is the one I don't have," she says. "I saw a chocolate Jar Jar head years ago for Easter. I did not find out about it until after they were all gone. My other favorite piece is a shoulder-to-hand of Jar Jar, said to be a prop from the movie, and given to me by my best friend Karen Katich."

Ashford's affection for the Gungan, however, goes deeper than her collecting shelf.

"There are plenty of characters in the movies for everyone to love," continues Ashford. "Just because you don't like, or understand, one character does not mean that others will not. In part my like for Jar Jar is due to him being on the outside of the group. My parents were foster parents for over 20 years. I grew up loving and taking care of the outsider kids. That is Jar Jar in my mind."

In listening to Ashford, my somewhat narrow mind had to stretch. I can't say she changed my tastes, but she did change my outlook. I can understand her "from a certain point of view." I also shared her appreciation for the different characters in the *Star Wars* galaxy, and I see how they appeal to different people, drawing a diverse crowd into the saga.

Ashford concludes, "For those anti-Jar Jar folks who made the Jar Jar in carbonite, thanks for doing that. You have made it so he will never die now." ☺

Get in Tracks!  
Mary Franklin  
Editor, *Bantha Tracks*







## CLASSIC MOMENT

WORDS: BRIAN J. ROBB



# THE JEDI COUNCIL

## WHAT THEY SAID

Shot during the final weeks of filming on *The Phantom Menace*, the pivotal Jedi Council scene was quite challenging. It featured the return of Yoda, realized as a puppet as in *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*.

### RICK MCCALLUM

"I'd been speaking to Frank [Oz] about it on and off for two or three years before we did the movie. There was just no way we were going to do it without him. It was essential to have him there: Yoda would not be Yoda without Frank Oz."

*The Making of The Phantom Menace* [Del Rey, 1999]

### GEORGE LUCAS

"Acting is acting, whether it is a human actor, a CG character, or a puppet. It's all the same. Most people think of Yoda as being real, because he is the height of puppet artistry. After Frank Oz did *Empire*, I tried to get him nominated for an Academy Award, but we heard back that puppetry wasn't an art. I think it's an art—and Yoda represented the highest level of that art."

*The Making of The Phantom Menace* [Del Rey, 1999]



## THE PHANTOM MENACE

1999 [Script] [deleted dialogue in brackets]

### INT. PALACE OF THE JEDI. COUNCIL CHAMBERS. SUNSET.

ANAKIN stands before the TWELVE JEDI. MACE WINDU holds a small hand-held viewing screen. In rapid succession, images flash across the screen.

ANAKIN: A ship. ... A cup. ... A ship...  
A speeder.

MACE WINDU turns the view screen off and nods towards YODA.

YODA: [Good, good, young one.] How feel you?

ANAKIN: Cold, sir.

YODA: Afraid, are you?

ANAKIN: No, sir.

[MACE WINDU: Afraid to give up your life?]

[ANAKIN: I don't think so.]

[ANAKIN hesitates for a moment.]

YODA: See through you, we can.

MACE WINDU: Be mindful of your feelings...

KI-ADI: Your thoughts dwell on your mother.

ANAKIN: I miss her.

YODA: Afraid to lose her... I think.

ANAKIN: [a little angry] What's that got to do with anything?

YODA: Everything. Fear is the path to the dark side... fear leads to anger... anger leads to hate... hate leads to suffering.

[ANAKIN: [angrily] I am not afraid.]

YODA: [A Jedi must have the deepest commitment, the most serious mind.] I sense much fear in you.

[ANAKIN: [quietly] I'm not afraid.]

[YODA: Then continue, we will.] 🗨️



"Yoda would not be Yoda without Frank Oz"

RICK MCCALLUM

"Most people think of Yoda as being real, because he is the height of puppet artistry."

GEORGE LUCAS

## WHO'S WHO IN THE JEDI COUNCIL



### Yarael Poof

Adept at Jedi mind tricks, the Quermian Poof uses Force suggestion to end conflicts by using enemies' fears against them.



### Saesee Tiin

This Itotchi has the ability to concentrate at high speeds, ideal for an accomplished pilot.



### Oppo Rancisis

Giving up the throne on his home planet, Rancisis dedicated himself to the Jedi and serving the galaxy through his highly developed military tactics.



### Eeth Koth

From the same species as Darth Maul, Koth is on the side of the good guys.



### Ki-Adi-Mundi

From the paradise world of Cerea, Ki-Adi-Mundi could accurately be nicknamed "two brains" thanks to his binary brain structure.



### Even Piell

Piell won his distinctive scar defeating terrorists who had underestimated the diminutive Jedi Master.



### Yaddle

A youthful 477, Jedi Master Yaddle looks up to Master Yoda, and offers her counsel while mastering ways of the Jedi.



### Adi Gallia

A skilled diplomat, Gallia knows her way around the political machine of Coruscant.



### Plo Koon

Master Plo's face mask protects his sensitive eyes and nostrils from the oxygen-rich atmosphere of Coruscant.



### Depa Billaba

Bringing order to chaos, Billaba is a voice of calm and organization.



### Yoda

An ancient Jedi Master well into his 800's, Yoda is deeply perceptive and is highly experienced in galactic affairs.



### Mace Windu


A senior member of the Council, Windu is a calm negotiator and a man of action ready to reinforce his words with strength.

## WHY IT'S A CLASSIC

This is a very important scene for several reasons. Although Anakin has met Qui-Gon Jinn and Obi-Wan Kenobi, this is his first experience with the larger world of the Jedi, a world he will soon be joining. For long-time *Star Wars* fans, this presented us with a glimpse of something often imagined but never before seen: the Jedi at the height of their powers as peacekeepers of the galaxy. It's also important for the following films and their depiction of Anakin's character: Here we have the first hints of his attachments (to his mother), an issue that becomes central in Episodes II and III, as he falls to the dark side and becomes Darth Vader. 🌟

NEXT TIME: VADER IS REMINDED OF HIS PAST AT CLOUD CITY





"I don't know who you are or where you came from, but from now on you'll do exactly as I say."

Join us next issue as

# CARRIE FISHER

tells it like it is!

## CLONE TALES

Season one of *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* goes under the microscope in our exclusive guide!

## TALKS YODA DOES!

Voice actor Tom Kane on Yoda, Yularen, and narrating the *Clone Wars*!

## EWOK EXPLOSION!

Warwick Davis talks furballs, while we meet some of the toughest little guys in the universe!

## SURVEY RESULTS

We exclusively reveal your favorite things from the *Star Wars* Universe!

PLUS ALL YOUR FAVORITE DEPARTMENTS AND MUCH MORE!

US NEWSSTANDS: JUNE 16

UK NEWSAGENTS: JULY 02

### VERSUS: WHO WINS?

Count Dooku would have to use his vast knowledge of the Force (Maul's major weakness) in order to triumph. Maul's animalistic side gives him an advantage over the weak, but against Dooku's measured skills? No contest.

